



# Amira Teacher Manual

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2024

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# Part 1: General Information

## 1.1 Overview of Amira Assessments

Amira offers a comprehensive Early Literacy Assessment in three testing windows over the course of the year. Districts use it for various purposes: as a benchmark, a universal screener, a dyslexia screener, or simply a means of placing students into the correct text complexity for Amira Practice. By default, the Amira **Benchmark Assessment** consists of two buckets:

- a) Dyslexia screening tasks
- b) Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) Passage with comprehension questions.

Metric	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	Reading Mastery	High Frequency Words	Phonological Awareness	Vocabulary Size
Scale	<p><b>WCPM</b></p> <p><i>Words Correct Per Minute</i></p> <p>Student's ability to read aloud with natural ease</p> <p>Incorporates accuracy and speed</p>	<p><b>ARM</b></p> <p><i>Amira Reading Mastery</i></p> <p>Synthesis of a student's demonstrated ability across curriculum-based measurements</p> <p>Shows how far ahead or behind a student is in relation to their grade level</p>	<p><b>ESRI</b></p> <p><i>Estimated Sight Recognition Inventory</i></p> <p>Estimated percentage of high frequency words a student has mastered</p> <p>Especially useful measure of reading fluency for younger readers</p>	<p><b>PSF</b></p> <p><i>Phoneme Segmentation Fluency</i></p> <p>Student's ability to parse phonemes into words</p> <p>Students are scored on how well all phonemes have been pronounced. PSF is an average over those scores</p>	<p><b>Estimated Words in Vocabulary</b></p> <p>An estimate of how many words are in the student's expressive vocabulary</p> <p>Estimates are based on published research on vocabulary development as a function of age</p>

Teachers and administrators receive data from both the screener (in the form of a Dyslexia Risk level) and the ORF Passage (in an automated transcript). The ORF passage also provides

insight into several important reading metrics, the most common of which is Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM). You can view the others in the table on the right.

Finally, Amira also offers **Progress Monitoring Assessments** which provide grade level ORF passages that can be used outside of the three major benchmark windows.

## 1.2 Assessment Options

Amira Assessments can be administered in three modes:

Options
<p>A. A full <b>Benchmark Assessment</b> with Dyslexia Screener tasks and an Oral Reading Fluency passage. Most schools administer such an assessment three times a year: at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the year.</p>

B. A **Progress Monitoring Assessment** that is administered with a grade level Oral Reading Fluency passage that can level down in difficulty if needed for the student to access the passage. Schools administer this as often as every other week to monitor improvement throughout the year.

C. A combination of the two assessments that is configured by the district with a combination of an Oral Reading Fluency passage and the Dyslexia Screener tasks of their choice.

### 1.3 General Test Settings

The Benchmark Assessment consists of a Dyslexia Screener and an Oral Reading Fluency passage with comprehension questions.

The Dyslexia Screener includes the following tasks:

- RAN: Rapid automatized naming requires the student to identify and articulate the elements of a long list. Processing speed and accuracy are measured.
- Letter Sounds: The student is shown a letter and asked to make the associated sound. For vowels, several alternatives are accepted.
- Word Reading: The student is shown the text of words, one at a time. The student must read the word.
- Blending: A video is provided of a person slowly articulating each phoneme in a word. The students must blend the sound into the complete word accurately.
- NWF: This task requires the student to read non-words in order to assess decoding skills.
- Spelling: Student ability to spell and encode will be tested with this task.
- Vocabulary: This task consists of choosing a descriptor or picture that best matches the definition of a word.
- Listening Comprehension: Students will answer questions about a story they've heard in order to gauge their listening comprehension skills.
- Oral Reading Fluency: This task consists of reading a passage to ascertain overall fluency and other threads of mastery. The passage will be dynamically adapted to better gauge student ability.
- Reading Comprehension: Students will answer questions about the passage they've read to gauge their comprehension skills.

The Progress Monitoring Assessments consist of a grade level Oral Reading Fluency passage with comprehension questions.

Language Configuration: Assessments can be assigned in English and/or Spanish. If you select both English and Spanish languages you will be given the option you see shown to the right. This is asking you to configure which language comes first, and if you want both assessments to be done in one test (one after the other) or in two tests (meaning the students will get one assessment and then be logged out, and the next time they log in they will get the second assessment).

#### # of TESTS

- 2 Tests, Spanish then English
- 2 Tests, English then Spanish
- 1 Test, Spanish then English
- 1 Test, English then Spanish

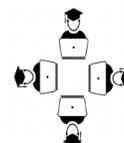
## Part 2: Teacher Administration Experience

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### 2.1 Preparing For Assessments

It is recommended to prepare for assessment administration by considering the following space set up and technology needs:

- **Space students out so their mics don't interfere with one another.** Amira locks in on the foreground voice, so we suggest students don't sit directly side-by-side. Consider facing students towards each other so their device mics point opposite directions. Pro-tip: have students sit at the four points of a "compass" facing inward like the diagram shown to the right.
- **Minimize background noise.** Amira can handle a lot of noise but there are limits. When a classroom exceeds the limit, Amira lets the student know. In other words, wait until Amira is done before singing songs, playing music, making loud announcements, etc.
- **(Optional) Utilize headphones.** Headphones are an option, but not necessary. Sometimes headphones can be helpful to reduce ambient noise. Headphones with a mic can help pick up the voice of students who speak very softly.
- Try common **technology troubleshooting tips**:
  - Close out multiple tabs on the device so that only Amira is open.
  - Clear cookies & cache.
  - Ensure the mic on the device is enabled.
  - For iPads: Make sure siri is turned off, try restarting, or begin a practice of restarting the devices weekly.
  - [Chat with Amira's support](#) team in-the-moment or email [support@amiralearning.com](mailto:support@amiralearning.com).
- **Ensure students have directions** for what to do when finished with their assessment.
- **Ensure students finish the assessment before logging out.** Teachers can track the progress of assessments in the tracking report.



### 2.2 Assigning an Assessment Overview

In order to assign and configure assessments, all teachers have access to the **Tracking Report** in their Amira Teacher Dashboard (see [here](#) for detailed instructions). Once they've opened their Tracking Report, they will see a class list of their students. On the right side of the report, they can identify if the students speak only English or if they are bilingual and also speak Spanish. All Amira assessments can be offered to students in English and/or Spanish or in English but with Spanish spoken directions.

On the left side of the report, teachers can click a checkbox to indicate they are planning to configure an assessment for a student. Once the box is checked, a teacher can assign a **Progress Monitoring Assessment** or a **Benchmark Assessment**. They can also assign the student’s language(s) for the assessment(s) and the order of the languages. Finally, during configuration, teachers will see the tasks a student will be offered as part of the assessment. These tasks are assigned through the district.

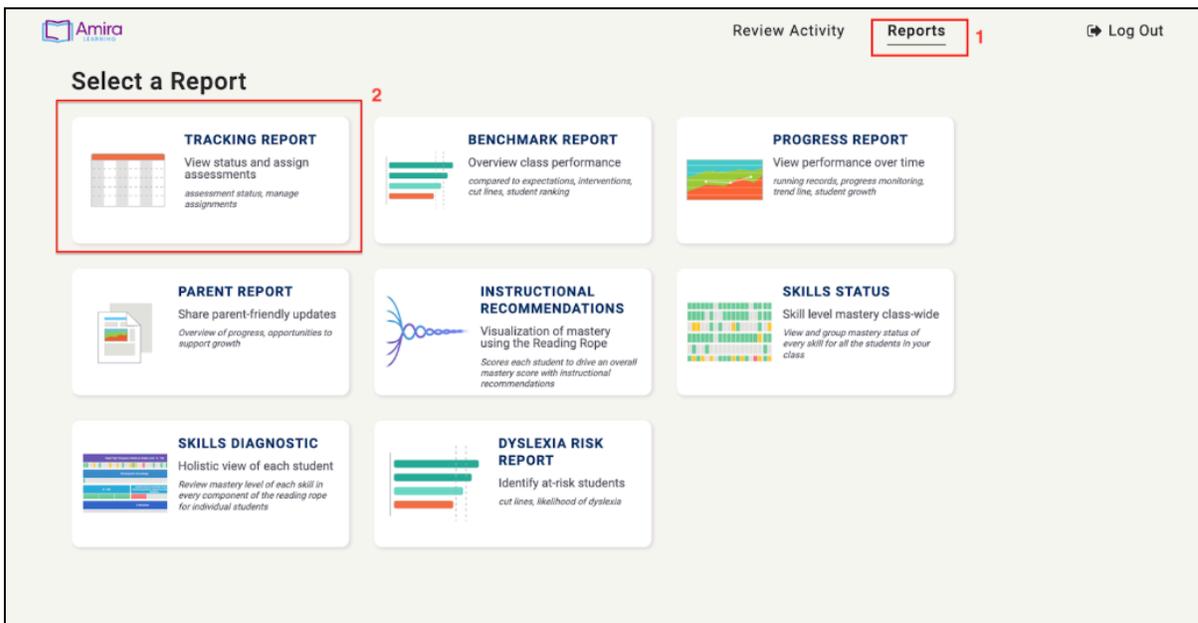
As students complete their assessment, their status towards the right side of the screen will change making it easy for a teacher to see who has started, completed, or is assigned an assessment. When a student is designated as “assigned” for the assessment, they will receive the assessment the next time they log into Amira. **When students sign in, they will be guided through the assessment by the avatar Amira;** teachers do not administer the assessment outside of assigning it to students through the Tracking Report.

### 2.3 Assigning an Assessment: Step-by-Step Directions

Watch this [video](#) or read the instructions below.

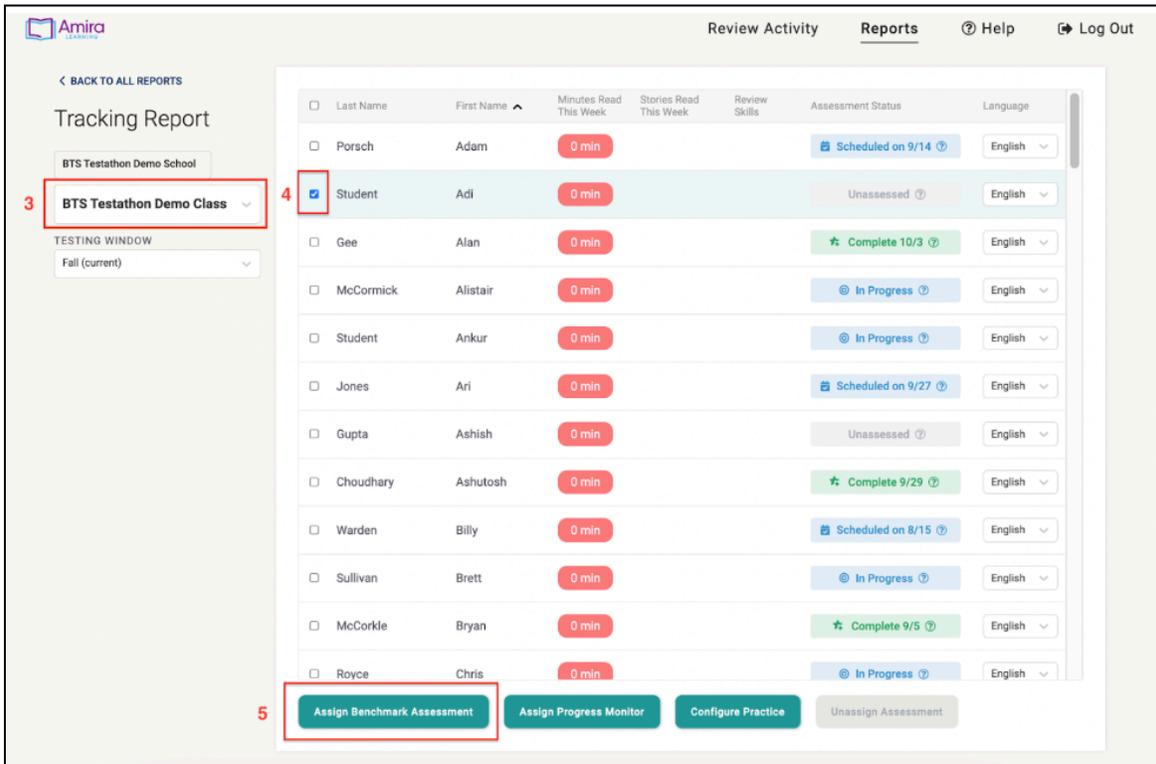
In order to assign and configure assessments:

1. From the Amira Teacher Dashboard, click **Reports**.
2. Click **Tracking Report**.

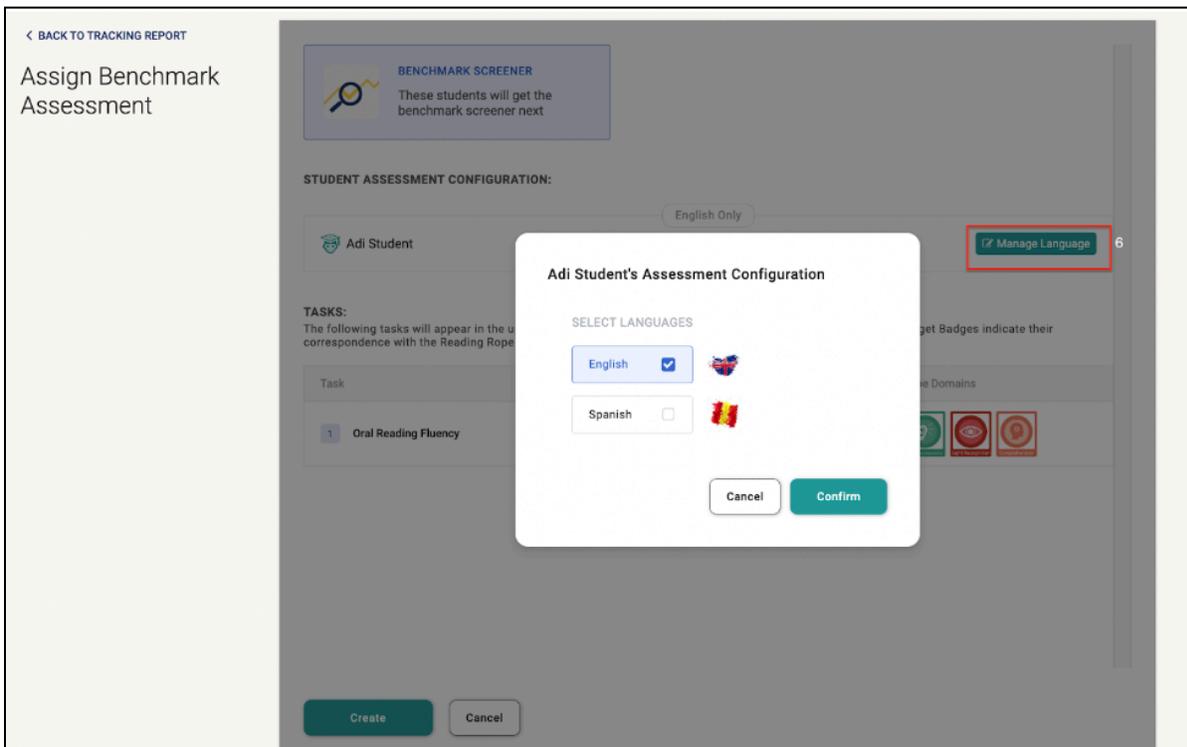


3. Select the class from the drop-down, if needed.

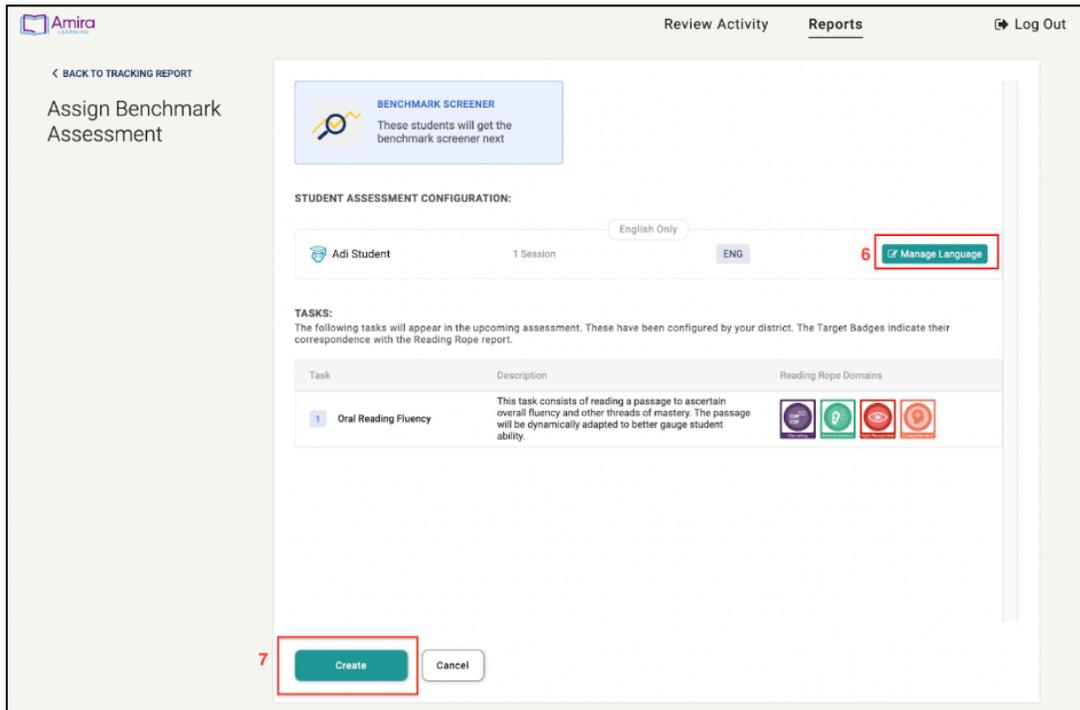
- Click student name(s) or Select All.
- Click **Assign Benchmark Assessment** or **Assign Progress Monitor**.



- Click **Manage Language** to adjust the student's assessment language configuration.

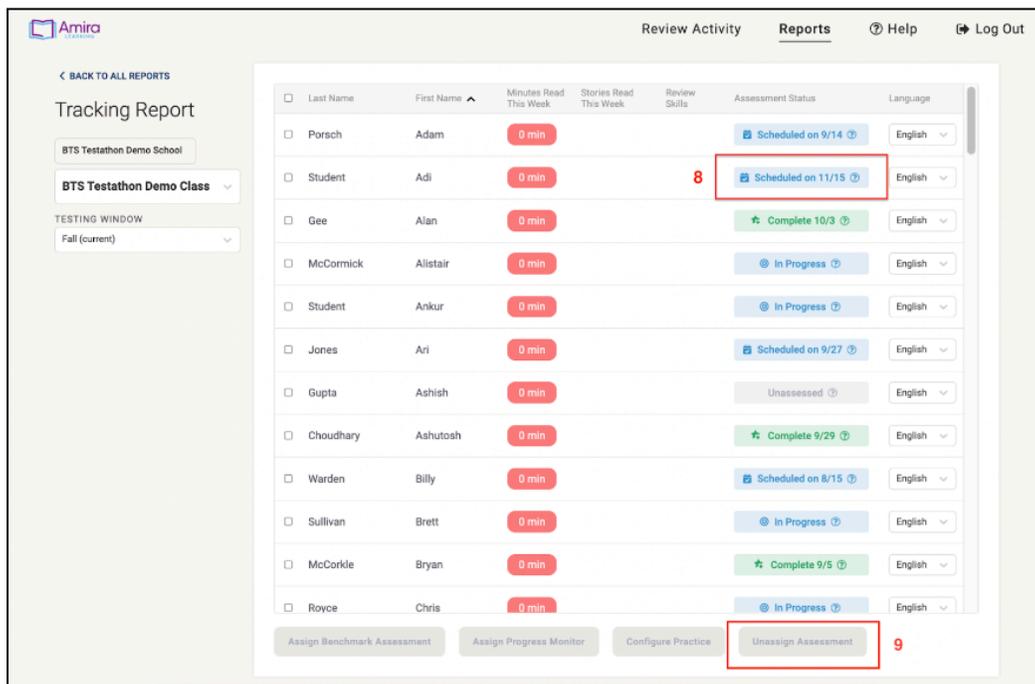


7. Click **Create** to assign the assessment.



8. Students who are assigned an assessment will show “Scheduled on mm/dd” on the Tracking Report Assessment Status.

9. NOTE: If an assessment is accidentally assigned, you can unassign the assessment by selecting the three-horizontal dot menu next to a student's name in the Tracking Report and then click Unassign Assessment.



## 2.4 Assessment Status

The following table indicates the different statuses a teacher might see in the tracking report for a student during an assessment period.

<i>Assigned</i>	<i>District Assigned</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Under Review</i>	<i>Reassess</i>	<i>Early Reader</i>
Student has been assigned an assessment and will receive it at next login.	Student has been assigned an assessment beginning on a certain date.	Student has completed assessment. View results: Benchmark & Dyslexia Reports.	Student has started but not yet completed.	Student completed, however it has been flagged for manual review (72hrs).	Student completed, but there was an issue leading to an invalid score.	Student completed, and was unable to complete the Kinder passage.

## 2.5 Suggestions for a Smooth Testing Process

- Use the materials provided in the teacher training to introduce students to the Amira program, show a student-friendly video of how the program works, and demonstrate for students how to log onto the program.
- Allow students to log onto the program and practice reading to Amira 1-2 times before assigning the assessment. This will allow students to practice reading out loud, ensure they read loudly and clearly enough for Amira to hear them, and practice navigating the program.
- Use the materials provided in the teacher training to introduce students to the Amira Assessment and show a student-friendly video with an introduction to the assessment.
- Set up your space with the suggestions listed above; space students out so their mics don't interfere with one another. Consider facing students towards each other so their device mics point opposite directions. Pro-tip: have students sit at the four points of a "compass" facing inward.
- Prepare all technology. Ensure all computers/tablets are fully charged and headsets are functioning.
- Prepare an assignment or task for students for when they finish the assessment.
- For technology issues, try these common troubleshooting tips:
  - Close out multiple tabs on the device so that only Amira is open.
  - Clear cookies & cache.
  - Ensure the mic on the device is enabled.

- For iPads: Make sure siri is turned off, try restarting, or begin a practice of restarting the devices weekly.
- [Chat with Amira's support](#) team in-the-moment or email [support@amiralearning.com](mailto:support@amiralearning.com).

## 2.6 Sample Language for Proctors

What to say:	What NOT to say:
<p><b>To introduce the assessment:</b>            “Today you will be reading to Amira to show what you know and what you need to learn next to grow as a reader. Amira will give you directions once you log onto the program. Make sure to read loud and proud, and try your best!”</p>	<p>DO NOT coach students in any way.            DO NOT help students by providing example reading or answers.</p>
<p><b>If a student is disengaged:</b>            “Please focus and do your best. You can do it!”</p>	<p>Do not assign a consequence or set a time limit for the student.            “Finish up, you have 5 minutes left.”            “If you don’t focus, you will not go to recess.”</p>
<p><b>If a student asks a question about the content of the assessment:</b>            “I am not able to help you. Try your best!”</p>	<p>DO NOT coach students in any way.            DO NOT help students by providing example reading or answers.</p>
<p><b>If a student asks a question about the instructions of the assessment:</b>            “Listen to Amira’s directions again.”            “Amira wants you to ____ (ex. read this word, choose an answer, etc.)”</p>	<p>DO NOT coach students in any way.            DO NOT help students by providing example reading or answers.</p>
<p><b>If there is a disruption (i.e. a student exhibits a disruptive behavior or there is a disruption outside of the classroom):</b>            “Sorry for that disruption. I know that was distracting. Let’s refocus and continue to try our best.”</p>	<p>DO NOT leave students unattended to deal with the disruption.</p>

### Additional Notes for Proctors:

- Amira manages the time of the test. There is no need to move students along.
- Amira will provide all instructions for students during the assessment. There is no need to give instructions for test items during the assessment.
- Teachers may not review, practice, or coach students on the tasks in the assessment.
- Amira will do the scoring by applying a consistent rubric. There is no need for teachers/proctors to score responses.

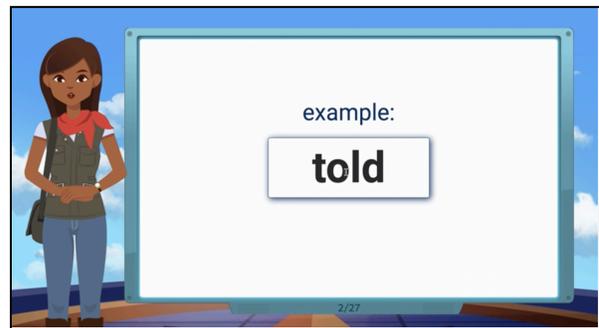
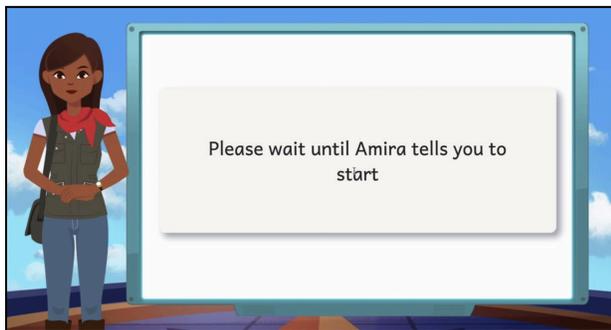
## Part 3: Student Administration Experience

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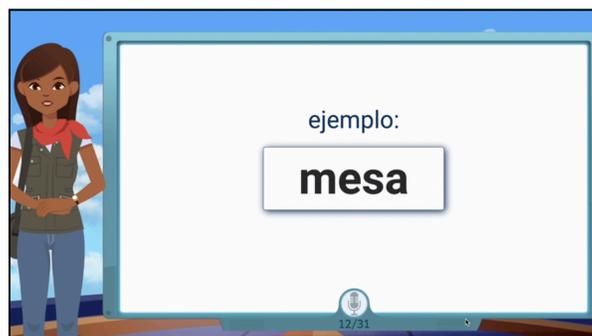
### 3.1 Overview of the Student Assessment Experience

Students are welcomed into the assessment by the avatar, Amira. She explains the student will be taking an assessment and encourages them to do their best. Depending on the configuration from the teacher or school, the test is broken into various tasks. The different tasks are timed to allow all students to successfully prove reading mastery and take sufficient breaks if needed. Students respond to assessment prompts verbally and the assessment is scored through the application. **Teachers will not need to score any portion of the assessment.**

After each portion of the assessment, **Amira provides clear guidelines** for the next section. Her instructions include an example before students are asked to attempt the task. Her pacing is designed to keep students engaged and encouraged while administering their assessment. Amira will not indicate if a response is correct or incorrect but maintains a positive cadence while the student continues through the assessment.

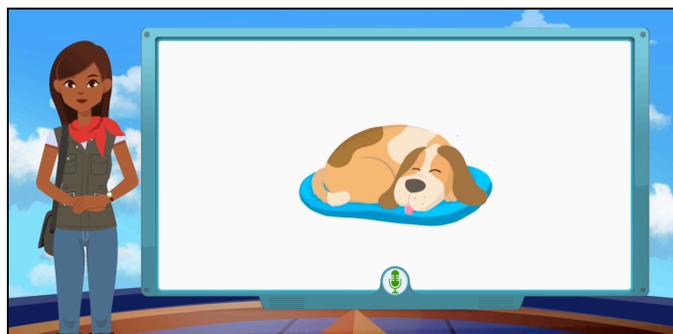
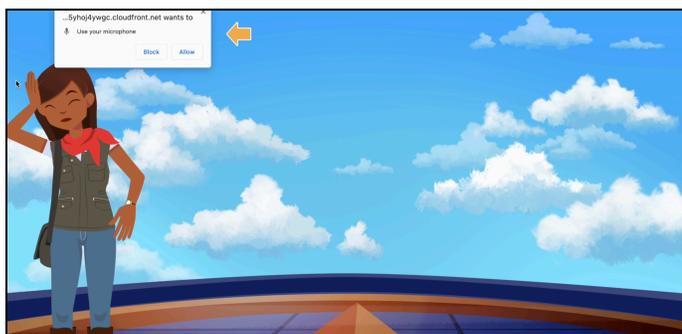


Should a student need **additional time or a break** during the assessment, Amira allows for such accommodations. There are opportunities to have directions repeated and for students to take a break from the assessment and return. Students taking the assessment in both English and Spanish can be assessed in two separate administrations or all at once. Teachers also have the ability to configure English or Spanish first for their students.



The Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) passage will automatically be aligned to the student’s grade level text for that time of year (BOY, MOY, EOY). If it is too difficult after 60 seconds, Amira will “downlevel” to the preceding grade level passage. For example, a non-reading first grader would take the first grade ORF and “level down” to the Kindergarten passage. If they can’t read the Kinder text after a minute, Amira will close out and thank the student while knowing they are now an “Early Reader.” **After the assessment, the next time students log in they will automatically be in Practice Mode with texts aligned to their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).**

When a student logs into the program for the first time, **Amira will walk through steps for troubleshooting possible sound and voice issues.** Amira will ensure she can hear students and if there are issues she will work to help them resolve sound issues. Students might be prompted to: turn on their microphone, speak louder, or adjust something. By walking through troubleshooting with students, Amira is taking the burden away from teachers and improving the experience and reporting across the classroom. Children will be more successful with Amira and technology generally as she will help them solve their own sound problems. Teachers do not need to assign this feature. It automatically pops up the first time a student logs in for practice or their first login for assessment.



### 3.2 Participation with Accommodations Overview

At Amira, we believe all students deserve access to equitable assessment materials, regardless of culture, background, learning needs, or disability. We are dedicated to providing a program, assessment, and all materials that support and are accessible to as many students as possible.

Amira assessments allow for accommodations and have several accommodations built into the program and available universally. All assessments and practice with Amira is available in English only, Spanish only, and English with Spanish directions. It’s expected that almost all students should not need additional accommodations outside of those available to all students as part of the program’s configuration. In rare circumstances, when acknowledged by an IEP or 504 plan, additional accommodations should be made available to students as part of the assessment and those are outlined in the second table below.

Below is a description of accommodations provided with Amira Assessments and guidelines for when and how to use them. The tasks in Amira's assessment have been validated with thousands of students using typical configurations. The additional accommodations are also outlined and allowable in rare situations. The accommodations should not interfere with the validity or outcomes of the assessment.

### 3.3 General Design For Accommodations

Amira adheres to the principles of universal design. The company's development processes revolve around UDL and Agile/Lean.

Universal design for learning (UDL) works to accommodate the needs and abilities of all learners via eliminating the unnecessary hurdles in the learning process. UDL centers on developing a flexible learning environment in which information is presented in multiple ways, students engage in learning in a variety of ways, and students are provided options when demonstrating their learning. Amira's UDL process aims for accessible and inclusive instructional approaches that meet the needs and abilities of all learners. The specific goals at the heart of Amira's design approach are:

- Incorporating universal design principles enhances an [inclusive learning environment](#).
- Designing a course to accommodate a wider variety of needs may eliminate potential learning barriers or unnecessary learning obstacles.
- Providing students with multiple means of perceiving, comprehending, and expressing their learning allows students to engage with the material in a way that most benefits them, and also encourages students to engage with material to improve in areas in which their skills are not as strong.

UDL is about providing options. Optionality supports diversity. Optionality provides pathways to innovation. From the Center For Teaching Innovation:

- Provide Options for Perception - Based on the premise that learners access information differently, this principle means providing flexible and multiple ways to present information.
- Provide Options for Expression - Since learners vary in their abilities to demonstrate their learning in different ways, this principle means providing flexible and multiple ways to allow students to express their knowledge or demonstrate their skills.
- Provide Options for Comprehension - Students are motivated to learn for different reasons and vary in the types of learning activities that keep them engaged. This third principle means providing multiple ways for engaging in course activities.

### 3.4 Amira and WCAG

In 2022, Amira's Assessment met the Level AA standard under the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0).

### 3.5 Accessibility Interface For Students With Visual or Auditory Impairments

Amira adheres to best practices for UX development, supporting WCAG 2.0 guidelines.

Criteria	Conformance Level
<a href="#">1.1.1 Non-text Content</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">1.2.1 Audio-only and Video-only (Prerecorded)</a> (Level A)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">1.2.2 Captions (Prerecorded)</a> (Level A)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">1.2.3 Audio Description or Media Alternative (Prerecorded)</a> (Level A)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">1.3.1 Info and Relationships</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">1.3.2 Meaningful Sequence</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">1.3.3 Sensory Characteristics</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">1.4.1 Use of Color</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">1.4.2 Audio Control</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">2.1.1 Keyboard</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">2.1.2 No Keyboard Trap</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">2.1.4 Character Key Shortcuts</a> (Level A 2.1 only)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">2.2.1 Timing Adjustable</a> (Level A)	Partially supports
<a href="#">2.2.2 Pause, Stop, Hide</a> (Level A)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">2.3.1 Three Flashes or Below Threshold</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">2.4.1 Bypass Blocks</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">2.4.2 Page Titled</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">2.4.3 Focus Order</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">2.4.4 Link Purpose (In Context)</a> (Level A)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">2.5.1 Pointer Gestures</a> (Level A 2.1 only)	Supports
<a href="#">2.5.2 Pointer Cancellation</a> (Level A 2.1 only)	Supports
<a href="#">2.5.3 Label in Name</a> (Level A 2.1 only)	Supports
<a href="#">2.5.4 Motion Actuation</a> (Level A 2.1 only)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">3.1.1 Language of Page</a> (Level A)	Supports

<a href="#">3.2.1 On Focus</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">3.2.2 On Input</a> (Level A)	Not Applicable
<a href="#">3.3.1 Error Identification</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">3.3.2 Labels or Instructions</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">4.1.1 Parsing</a> (Level A)	Supports
<a href="#">4.1.2 Name, Role, Value</a> (Level A)	Supports

### 3.6 Accommodations Key- Program Configurations

Accommodation	Description	Available?
Spanish Proctoring For English Assessment	Enable students being tested in English to receive Spanish-language proctoring to ensure that they understand the tasks and have an equitable opportunity to show what they know.	Yes
Spanish Screener	Enable students to be screened for dyslexia in Spanish to prevent disproportionate flagging of ELLs.	Yes
Paper-Based Administration	Enable students with a range of special needs to receive a non-digital test administered by the teacher or a specialist.	Yes
Paper-Based Spanish Administration	Enable Spanish speaking/reading students with a range of special needs to receive a non-digital test administered by the teacher or a specialist.	Yes
Configure Time	Enable students to receive more time.	Yes
Retest	Ensure that technology or environmental issues don't interfere with students' focus or ability to continue. If the environment is an issue, the student can be reassessed.	Yes
Preparing Students	Ensure that students understand how to get repeat instructions and otherwise get fairly tested.	Yes
Removing Tasks	Reduce the time and complexity of the assessment process for students needing a less complex assessment.	Yes

### 3.7 Additional Accommodations Allowable for Amira Assessments

Accommodation:	RAN	LNF	NWF	WRF	ORF	Comp
Quiet setting for testing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Small group for testing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Breaks between tasks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Assistive Technology (e.g., hearing aids, glasses)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Enlarged Materials (through screen magnification)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Colored overlays, filters, lighting adjustments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Tracking Device		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Whisper Phones						

### 3.8 Accommodation: Spanish Proctoring For English Assessment

Goals:

1. Prevent misunderstanding of the test protocol that then results in unreliable assessment outcomes for a student.
2. Ensure equity for students who have a discomfort receiving instruction in English and are used to engaging with teachers in Spanish.

When To Use:

This accommodation is designed to be used at the discretion of the teacher. Any student can be assessed in the hybrid mode whenever a teacher or assessment coach/supervisor desires.

How To Use:

1. Log the student in as usual
2. Access the Spanish Proctoring button in the Get Started dialog
3. Type in the password “Leyondo”

4. Let the student take the Assessment as usual

### 3.9 Accommodation: Spanish Screener

Goals:

1. Distinguish between lack of familiarity with English reading and Dyslexia risk. This accommodation enables a determination of Dyslexia risk in Spanish.
2. Identify a student's level of reading mastery in Spanish
3. Establish a student's mastery of specific skills in Spanish
4. Ensure equity in enabling students from a Spanish household to be assessed in their first language

When To Use:

This accommodation should be used whenever equity necessitates assessing a student in Spanish. In addition, when a Spanish-native ELL is flagged as "high risk" for Dyslexia by the English screener, the student should be tested with the Spanish screener.

How To Use:

There are two methods for instructing Amira to employ Spanish screening.

1. Rostering Approach
  - a. Provide Amira with a SS of students to be assessed in Spanish
  - b. The SS should have a student ID that matches the core rostering input
  - c. Amira will upload the SS and notify the District of a successful run
  - d. Students log in and will automatically be directed to a Spanish assessment
2. Teacher Approach
  - a. Teacher should log into Amira
  - b. Navigate to the Tracking Report
  - c. Select the class as appropriate and locate the student that needs a Spanish assessment
  - d. Access the right-hand options menu associated with that's student row in the report
  - e. Select the Bilingual or Spanish options

The screenshot displays the Amira Learning interface for a Tracking Report. The top navigation bar includes 'Review Activity', 'Reports', 'Help', and 'Log Out'. The left sidebar shows 'Laura Demo School' and 'Laura Demo Class' selected. The main table lists students with their names, minutes read, stories read, and assessment status. The 'Language' column for the student 'Beto' is highlighted with a red box, showing a dropdown menu with options for 'Bilingual', 'English', and 'Bilingual'.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Minutes Read This Week	Stories Read This Week	Review Skills	Assessment Status	Language
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Louisa	0 min			Complete 8/22	English
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Diego	0 min			Complete 8/22	English
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Beto	0 min			Complete 9/2	Bilingual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Lena	0 min			Complete 12/20	English
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	Victoria	0 min			Scheduled on 1/2	Bilingual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	George	0 min			Scheduled on 1/5	English
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hawthorne	Josephine	0 min			Scheduled on 9/22	English

Other Information:

A student can be assessed in the following ways:

- English only
- Spanish only
- English and Spanish in one session
- English in one session followed by Spanish in another
- English with Spanish proctoring (see above)

### 3.10 Accommodation: Paper-Based Administration

Goals:

1. Enable students who cannot use the digital environment to receive an equivalent assessment.
2. Enable teachers to provide accommodations around the test-taking experience.
3. Provide an alternative assessment for students who cannot make use of a visual or JAWS based interface.

When To Use:

This accommodation should be used when a student cannot be “fairly” tested using the digital interface. Because Amira does not rely on keyboard input and is a purely voice-based interaction, the need for a paper-based test should be limited to a small number of situations. However, when a student can only be tested by a teacher, the paper-based process provides an equivalent to Amira’s digital version of the assessment.

You can find the paper/pencil test [here](#).

How To Use:

The paper version of the assessment can be substituted as an accommodation. The process for using the assessment is extremely well-documented and well supported.

The paper-based version has two implementations. A shorter screening assessment can be used as an accommodation substitute for Amira’s Dyslexia screener.

Screening	Kindergarten		First		Second	Third
	BOY	EOY	BOY	EOY	BOY	BOY
Letter Sound	✓	✓	✓			
Blending Onset-Rimes & Phonemes	✓	✓	✓			
Word Reading			✓	✓	✓	✓

The full inventory can be used as an accommodation for Amira’s universal screening.

Inventory	Kindergarten			First			Second			Third		
	BOY	MOY	EOY	BOY	MOY	EOY	BOY	MOY	EOY	BOY	MOY	EOY
Book and Print Awareness	✓	✓	✓									
Phonemic Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Graphophonemic Knowledge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Word Reading			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reading Accuracy				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fluency				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Listening/Reading Comprehension	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Other Information:

The paper-based assessment is a complete assessment with printed forms and detailed instructions.

### 3.11 Accommodation: Paper-Based Spanish Administration

Goals:

1. Enable Spanish-only students who cannot use the digital environment to receive an equivalent assessment.
2. Enable teachers to provide accommodations around the test-taking experience for Spanish reading students.
3. Provide an alternative assessment for Spanish-only students who cannot make use of a visual or JAWS based interface.

#### When To Use:

This accommodation should be used when a student cannot be “fairly” tested using the digital interface. Because Amira does not rely on keyboard input and is a purely voice-based interaction, the need for a paper-based test should be limited to a small number of situations. However, when a student can only be tested by a teacher, the paper-based assessment process provides an equivalent to Amira’s digital version of the assessment.

You can find the paper/pencil test [here](#).

#### How To Use:

The paper version of the assessment can be substituted as an accommodation. The process for using the assessment is extremely well-documented and well supported.

#### Other information:

The paper-based assessment is a complete assessment with printed forms and detailed instructions.

### **3.12 Accommodation: Configure Time Outs**

#### Goals:

1. Provide extra time for students who need an accommodation

#### When To Use:

In rare cases, a student may require more time for an equitable assessment experience. However, this is not an accommodation that should be widely used. Most Amira tasks “time out” because the data shows that students rarely make progress after a certain level of struggle.

#### How To Use:

1. Teacher should log into Amira
2. Navigate to the Tracking Report
3. Select the class as appropriate and locate the student that needs more time
4. Access the right-hand options menu associated with that student’s row in the report
5. Select the Extend Time option

### **3.13 Accommodation: Retest**

#### Goals:

1. Enable a more accurate assessment of a student’s ability if an initial interaction is flawed
2. Ensure that students who need a hands-on trial are accommodated

#### When To Use:

This accommodation is designed to resolve issues associated with two different circumstances. If a student’s

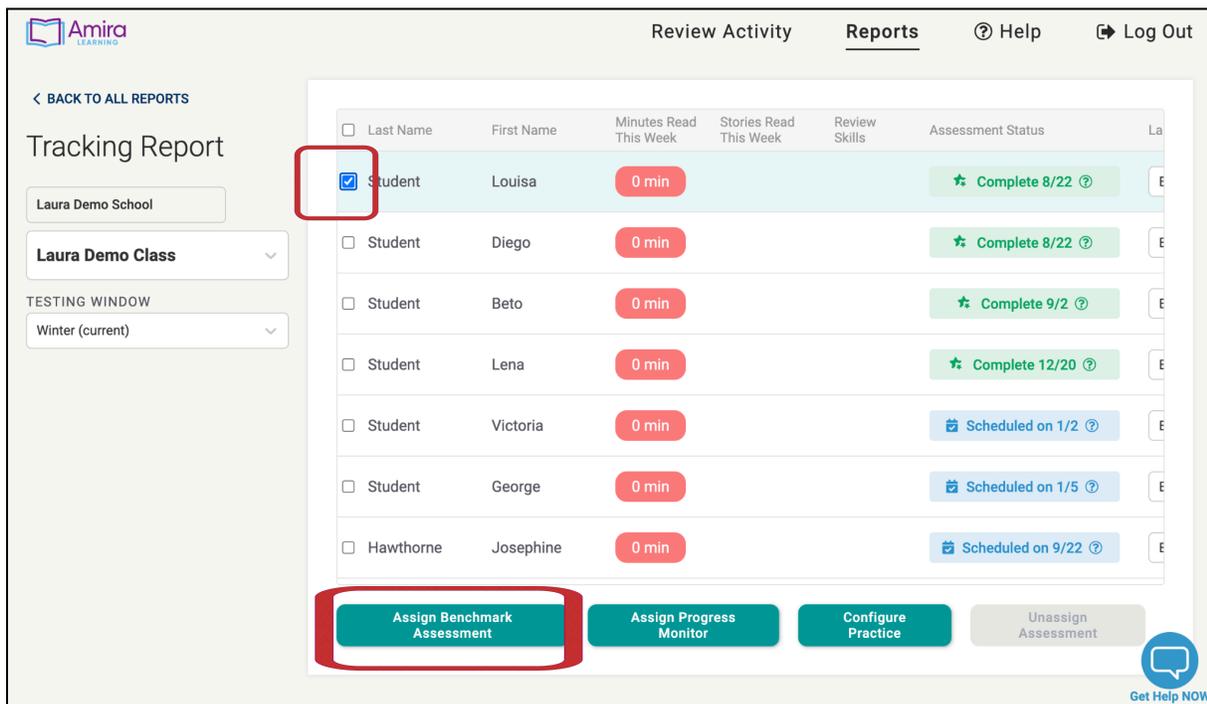
assessment is marred by one-off issues (e.g. an alarm or classroom distractions), the student can re-take. If a student needs extra familiarity in order to be in an appropriate state of readiness, this accommodation enables a “trial run.”

A re-assess should be at the teacher’s discretion.

How To Use:

1. Teacher should log into Amira
2. Navigate to the Tracking Report
3. Select the class as appropriate and locate the student that needs a re-assessment
4. Select the row with that student such that the row highlights
5. Press the assign button

The next time the student logs into Amira, the software will give them the assessment again.



### 3.14 Accommodation: Preparing Students

Goal:

1. Ensure students who need extra preparation, get to readiness.

When To Use:

This accommodation should be employed at the teacher’s judgment.

How To Use:

To provide extra preparation for the Amira assessment, please refer to the Teacher’s Guide.

### 3.15 Accommodation: Removing Tasks

Goal:

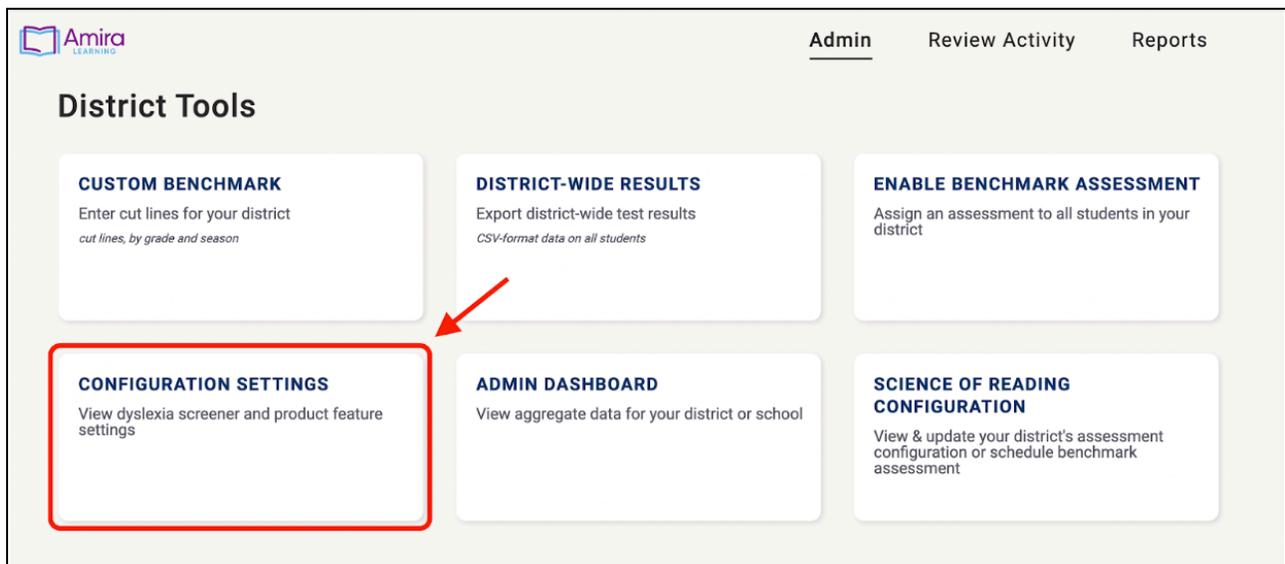
1. Reduce the level of test-taking complexity
2. Reduce the amount of time required

When To Use:

When the default configuration for the Amira screening or assessment process is beyond the capacity of a student to handle, tasks can be removed.

How To Use:

District or School administrators have the ability to configure the tasks for the Dyslexia Screener and Benchmark Assessment. Watch a [video walkthrough](#) or follow the steps listed in the following section of this manual under **Part 4 - District Configuration Settings and Administration Experience.**



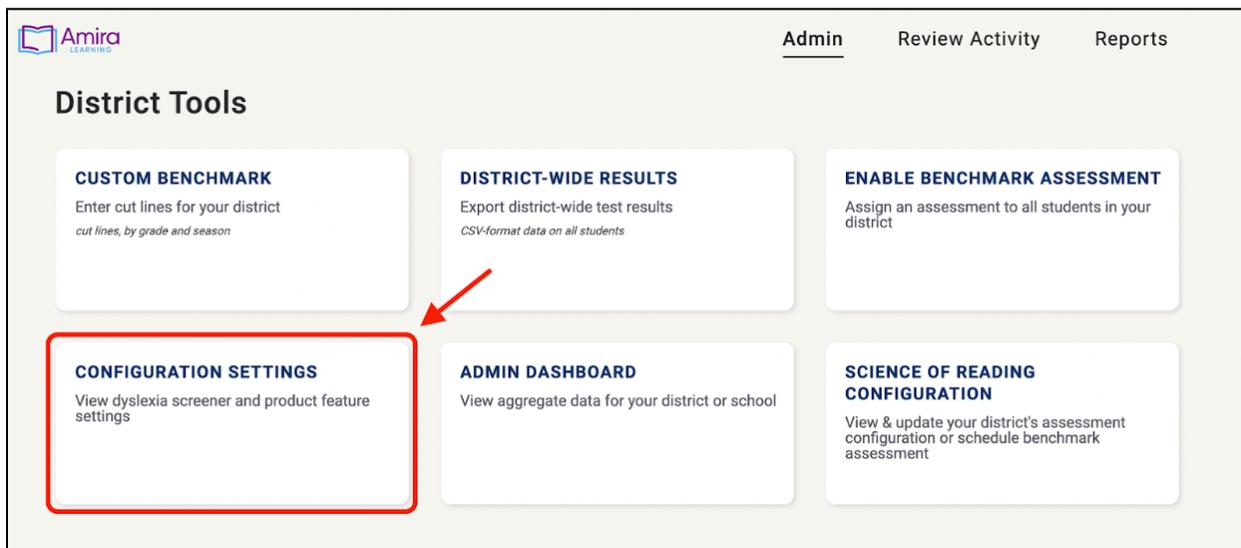
## Part 4: District Configuration Settings and Administration Experience

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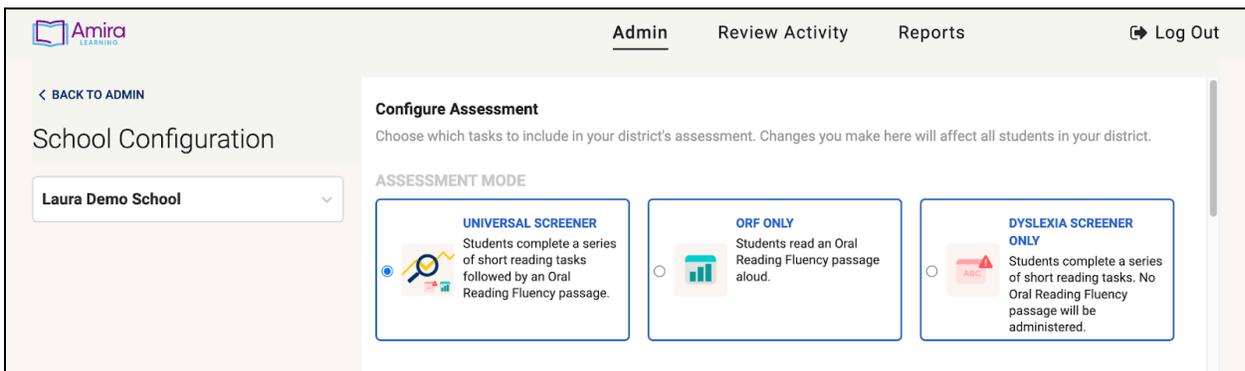
### 4.1 Assessment Configuration Settings: Step-by-Step Directions

Amira's assessment features can be customized to meet district needs or state requirements. District and School administrators have the ability to configure the tasks and administration windows for the Dyslexia Screener and Benchmark Assessment. Watch a [video walkthrough](#) or follow these steps:

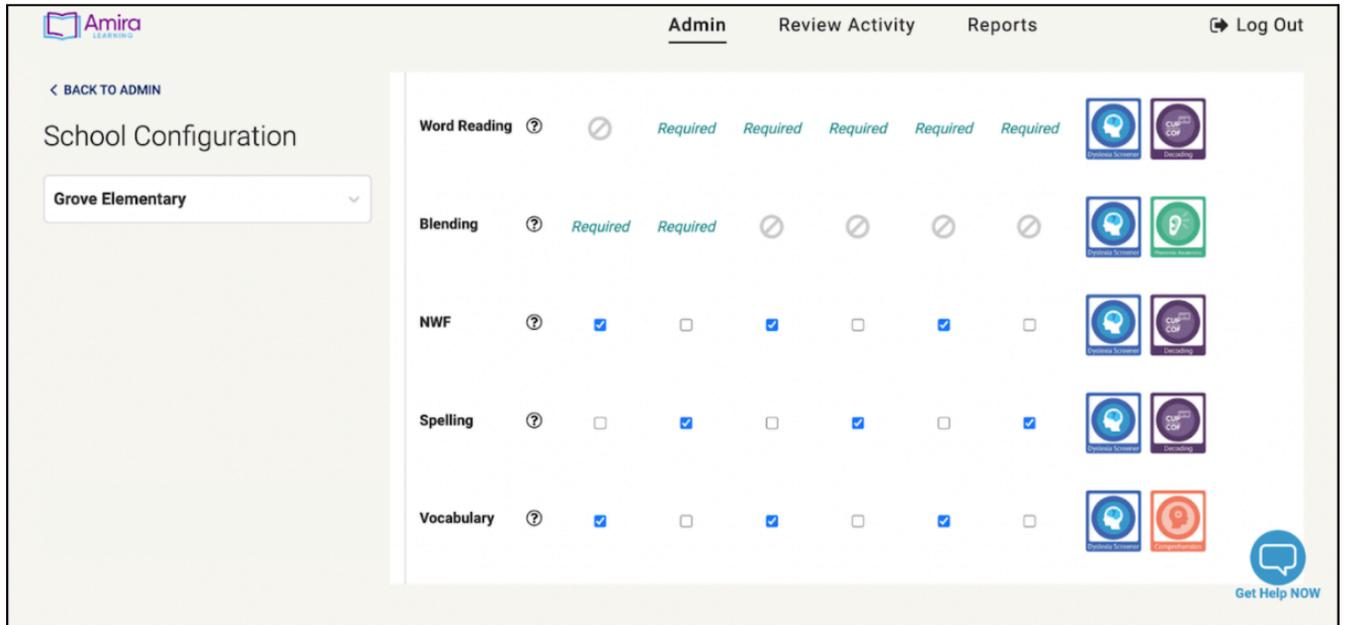
1. From the Amira Teacher Dashboard, click **Admin**.
2. Click on **Configuration Settings**.



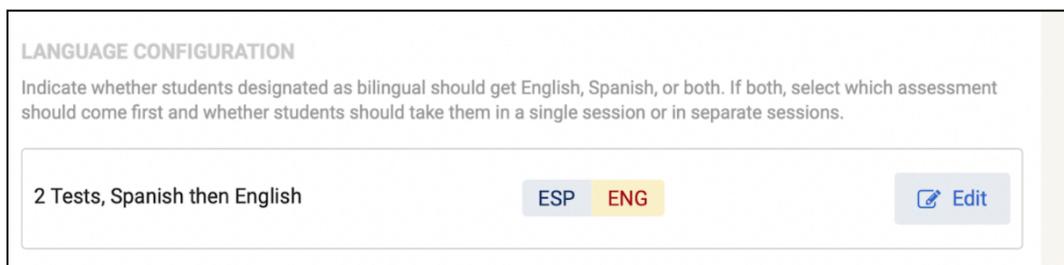
3. Once you've clicked the "Configuration Setting" tile, you'll notice if your benchmark (BOY, MOY, or EOY) is set to include the **Dyslexia Screener**, **ORF**, or **both (Universal Screener)**.



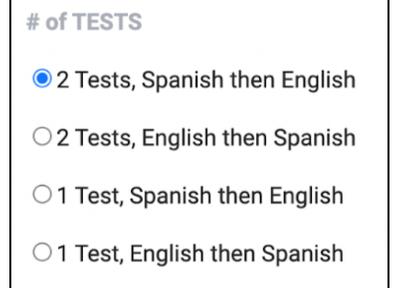
4. Scroll down to see the settings for each grade level. There are a total of ten possible tasks in the Dyslexia Screener. Some are required (as noted) for all or certain grade levels. As an administrator, you can **turn the tasks on or off** for different grade levels. Just remember, everytime you add a task, the test gets a little longer for students. On the right side of the screen, you can see which part(s) of the Reading Rope are associated with each task.



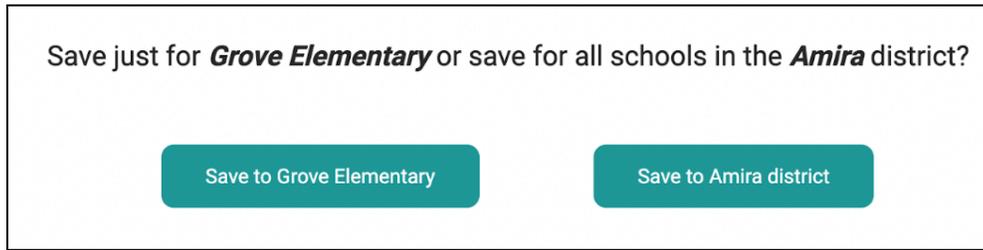
5. Finally, at the bottom of the dashboard, you can choose **language settings**. Again, these are saved for your district. This allows you to decide which languages appear and in what order.



If you select both English and Spanish languages you will be given the option you see shown to the right. This is asking you to configure which language comes first, and if you want both assessments to be done in one test (one after the other) or in two tests (meaning the students will get one assessment and then be logged out, and the next time they log in they will get the second assessment).

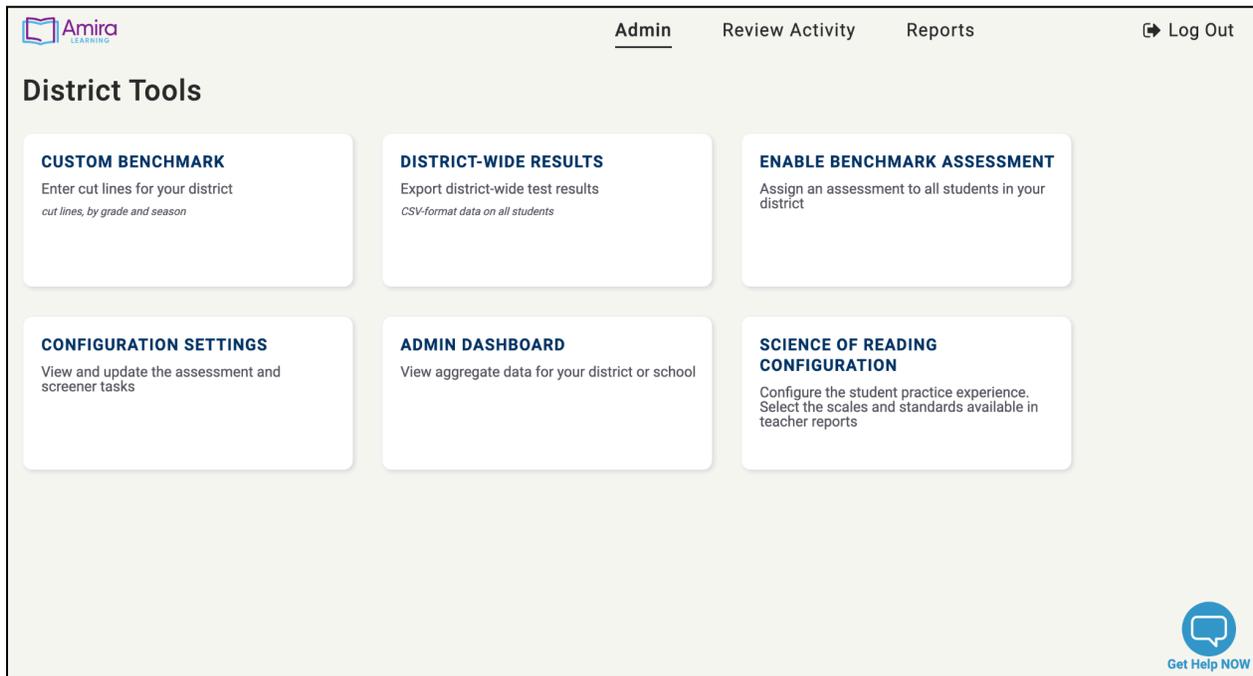


6. **Don't forget to save.** When you click the Save button, regardless of the school you're on, you'll get a pop up window asking if you want to save those settings to the specific school, or to the entire district.



## 4.2 District Tools

District and school leaders can follow assessment completion, status of scores, and configure assessments through their **District Tools**.



### A. Custom Benchmark

Many schools and districts utilize Amira's nationally normed benchmarks for students to be sorted into above, below, or at grade level as a reader. Your school or district, however, might adhere to your own cut scores. This form allows you to set the cutline labels and benchmarks so teachers see children

sorted based on your **district's benchmarks**, rather than our nationally normed expectations by grade level.

Pro-Tip: In order to use this form, you must enable it and set scores for every grade at every interval (Fall, Winter, Spring) during the year.

## B. Enable Benchmark Assessment

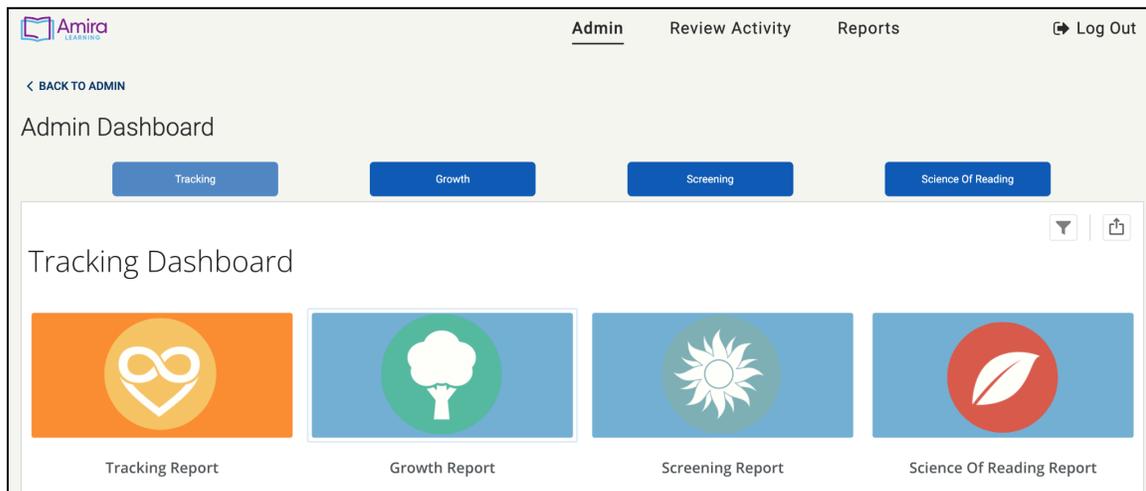
This allows a district administrator to set the window for benchmark assessments. These windows should be set for BOY, MOY, and EOY.

Pro-Tip: Once the window is opened, students will automatically receive the assessment the next time they login. Don't let your teacher be surprised by the assessment, publish these dates early and often for teachers.

Window	Start	End
BOY	Aug 1	Nov 30
MOY	Dec 1	Mar 31
EOY	Apr 1	Jul 31

## C. Admin Dashboard

This is probably the most essential tool for a district administrator hoping to understand **Amira usage and growth across their schools**. In the Admin Dashboard, there are graphics and charts that illustrate who is using Amira and how much, and the reading growth associated with usage. The Growth and Screening Dashboards allow administrators to see the results of their assessments in their district and schools. The most powerful feature of the Growth Dashboard is the comparison of students using Amira at differing thresholds (None, Some, and Frequent) and the pace of weekly fluency growth for each of these groups of users. Again, these dashboards are broad views of the district but have filterable capabilities that allow administrators to see the status and results by schools and classrooms. Click [here](#) for a detailed overview on how to leverage the dashboards.



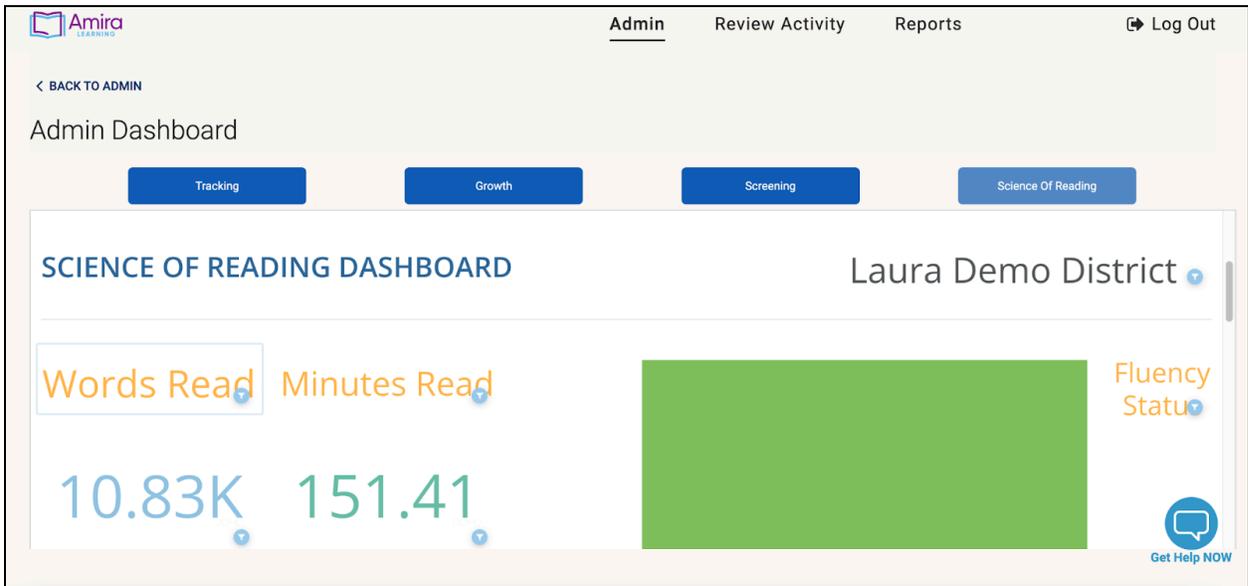
## D. District-Wide Results

The District-Wide Results report will allow a district or school administrator to download a CSV for each benchmark window that contains the most current assessment data. This report is refreshed weekly. (Click [here](#) for a data dictionary walking through the columns in this report). Admin can also download a **District Tracking Report** by benchmark window that provides a list of students and their assessment completion status (Complete, In Progress, Not Complete, etc.).



## E. Science of Reading Configuration

The Science of Reading Configuration allows administrators to see the number of minutes and words read in their district, schools, classrooms, and by students, and provides a color-coded fluency status. Dials and heat maps aligned to the pillars of the Reading Rope also allow district administrators to see mastery and needs across schools, grades, and classrooms in terms of the different dimensions of reading. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Science of Reading Configuration.



## Part 5: Reports and Data

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### 5.1 Overview of Teacher Reports

Teachers can and do utilize all of Amira's reports for instructional decision making. Educators describe using our reports for determining access to intervention services, identifying skill and instructional gaps, and providing skill-specific instruction to every student as they grow as readers.

When considering learning opportunities for groups of students, many teachers turn to the **Skills Status Report**. They can easily identify skills students need to practice or receive explicit instruction in to move towards mastery. The color coding and drag and drop feature makes it easy for teachers to find gaps, form small groups, and plan lessons to support students. Teachers can also scroll to any grade level and see standards for the pillars of the Reading Rope at different grade levels. This allows them to find skills for improvement for children above and below grade level so all students can receive explicit instruction in the appropriate reading skills. The report also provides resources, activities, and recommendations for teachers to use for the various skills.

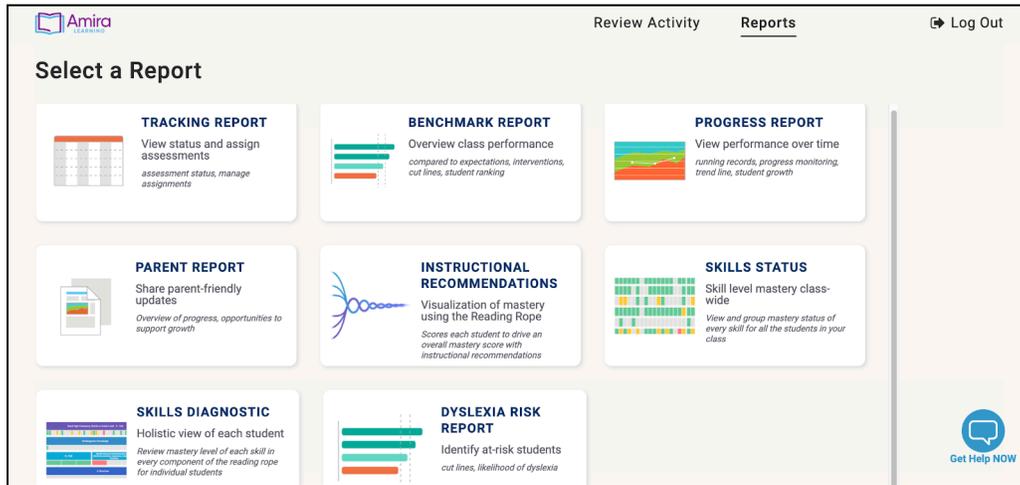
The true power of the Skills Status Report is the **continual updating of the data**; every time a child reads with Amira the data is updated to reflect the most recent reading experience, and this is reported down to the phoneme and skill level. Teachers are able to see exactly how well a child is reading and specifically target their instruction to provide the most effective tools for growth. Alongside the skills mastery data, Amira provides the teacher with a transcript and a recording of the child reading with Amira. This allows teachers to pair the wealth of data with the nuance of listening to a child read to really understand and teach against their literacy gaps.

Schools deploy these tools in the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) meetings, Professional Learning Communities, and other support systems. Educators and families can partner alongside the data to build a true understanding of a student's literacy gaps and the next steps required of everyone to support the student's growth. The information provided through Amira Learning allows these teams to be deeply focused on actionable teaching of skills and providing valuable support to all children learning to read.

For instruction and intervention of individual students, most teachers consider the **Instructional Recommendations Report** or the **Skills Diagnostic Report**. These reports allow teachers to identify gaps for a specific student based on their standards and the pillars of the Reading Rope. As mentioned earlier, these reports can provide a window into the reading gaps of the student and resources for teachers to use in their instruction. All the resources are aligned to Science of Reading interventions and focus on explicit instruction for students to be paired with significant reading practice. As instructional teams consider the Skills Diagnostic Report, they can clearly see the skill gaps informing a child's reading ability and create meaningful instruction and intervention plans to support the student's growth in skill and overall reading mastery.

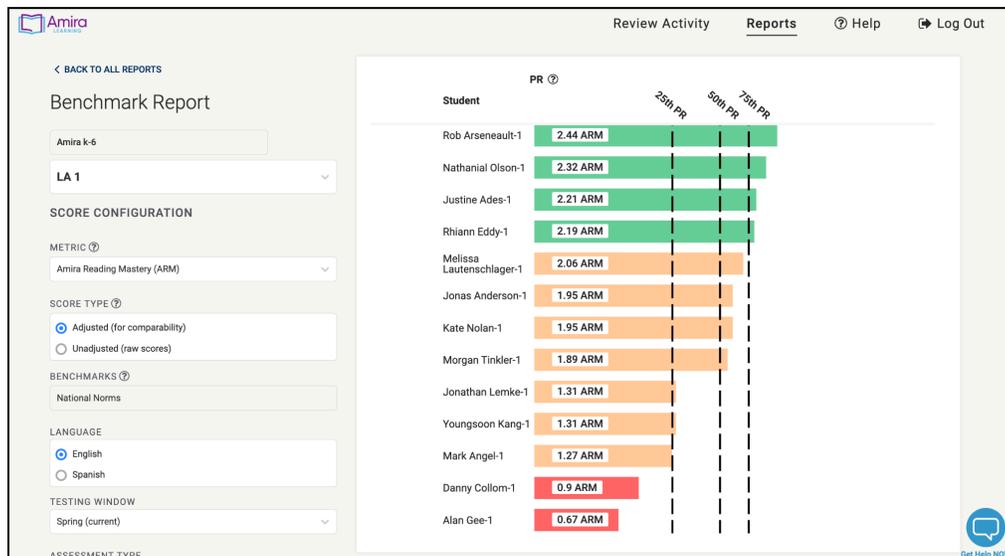
## 5.2 Reports on the Teacher Dashboard

At Amira Learning, our goal is to ensure all educators have access to the most current and important reading data on every child at any moment. Thus, the **Teacher Dashboard** has access to seven different reports allowing teachers to easily consider the abilities and areas for growth for all of their students, providing them with the insights and tools needed to support students where it matters most.



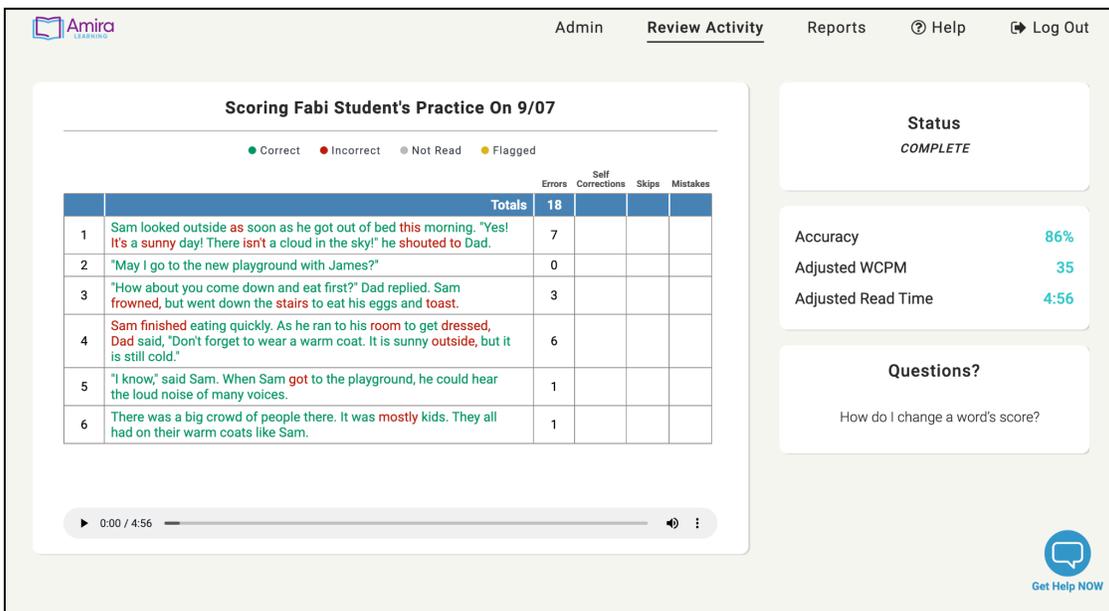
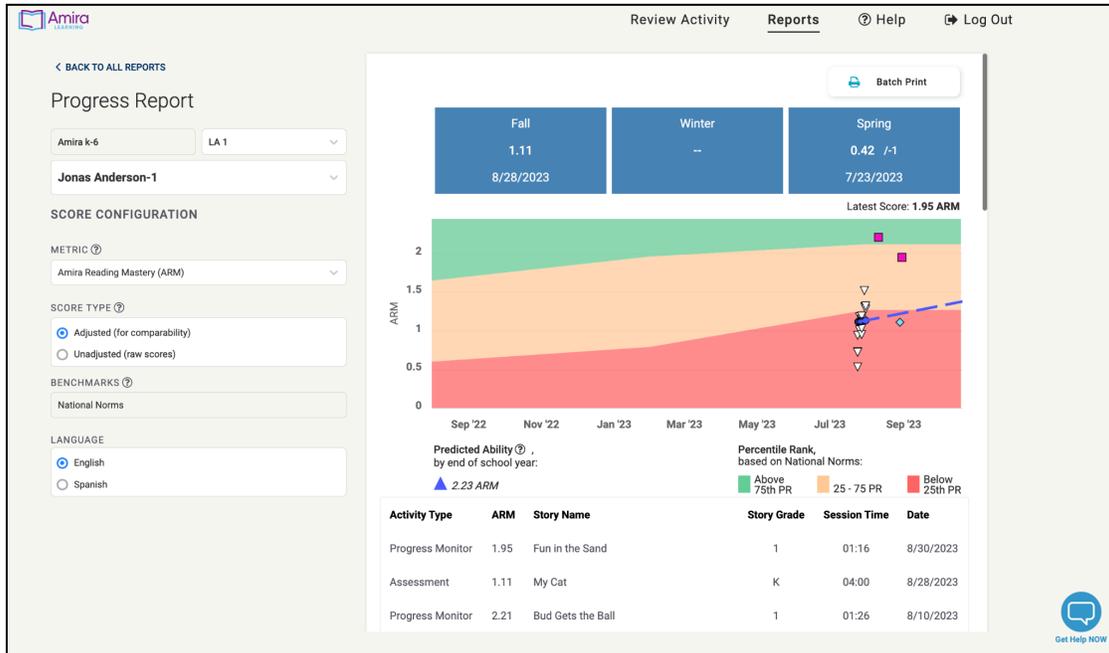
### A. Benchmark Report

The Benchmark Report allows teachers to see a quick **overview of their students' abilities** as compared to each other and national norms. On the left side of the screen, teachers can change the metric they'd like to see projected in the report. Student achievement based on the most recent assessment can be displayed with information on Words Correct Per Minute, High Frequency Words, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary Size and Reading Mastery. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Benchmark Report.



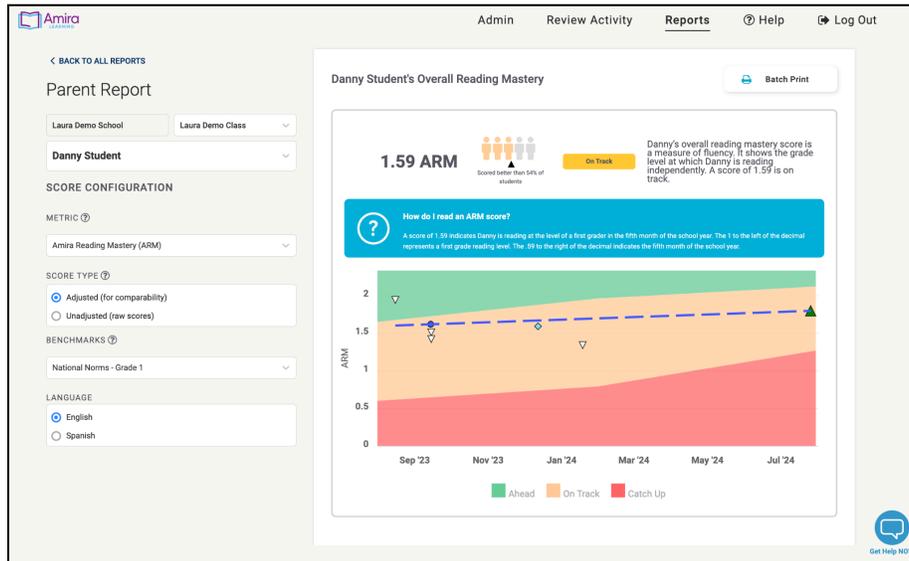
## B. Progress Report

The Progress Report allows a teacher to see the **overall progress and trajectory of a student** in their class. Each reading session a child completes with Amira (practice or assessment) is displayed on their growth chart. A projection line indicates how a student is progressing toward their goals. All of the stories a child has read with Amira are included on the chart and in a list below the chart. From the list, a teacher can see the title of the story and the time read, and click on the story to see a transcript and listen to the child reading the story. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Progress Report.



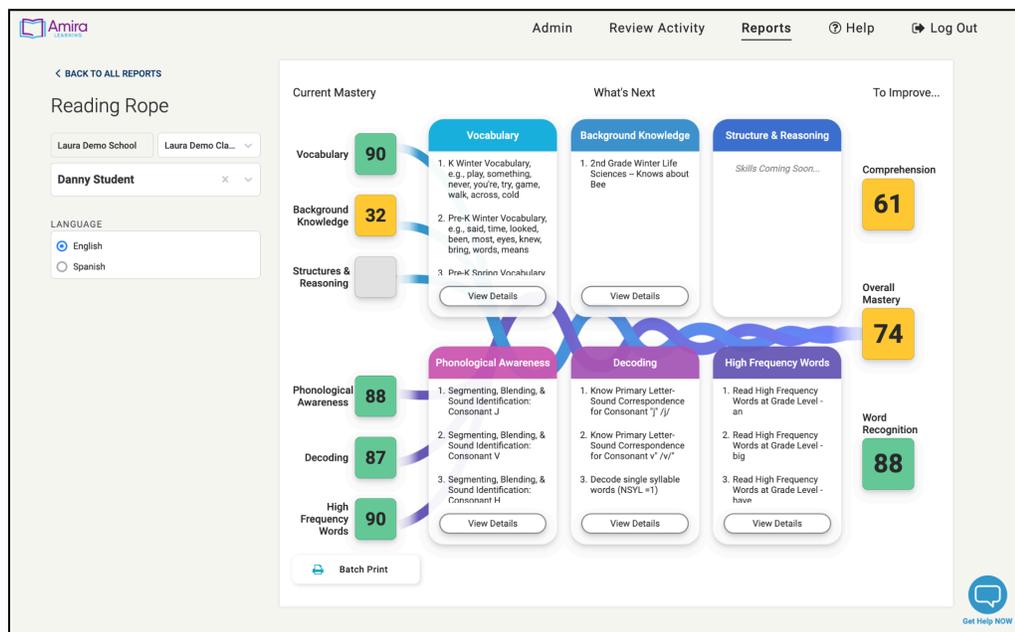
## C. Parent Report

Similar to the Progress Report, the Parent Report has a **graph of the passages read by the student and their projection line**. The Parent Report also has information to help the parent or family of the student to decipher the data, understand their student's abilities, and offers **suggestions for supporting their child at home**. The recommendations are specific to their child's needs and to skills and activities a parent can manage supporting. Click [here](#) to learn more about the parent report.



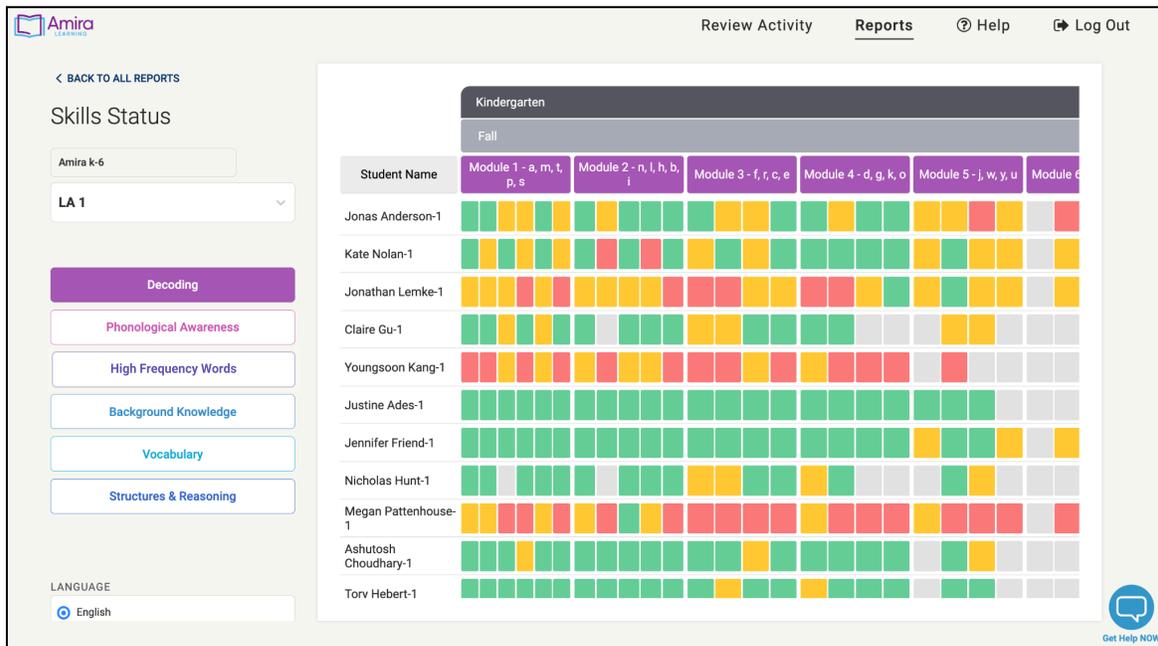
## D. Instructional Recommendations Report

The Instructional Recommendations Report is the best place for a teacher to get a **holistic view of a student's reading abilities as associated with the Reading Rope**. Students are assigned scores based on the six different components of the rope and these are combined to create an overall current mastery score. Additionally, teachers can view instructional information and targeted strategies for each student, and for each skill, by clicking on "View Details" in the report. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Instructional Recommendations Report.



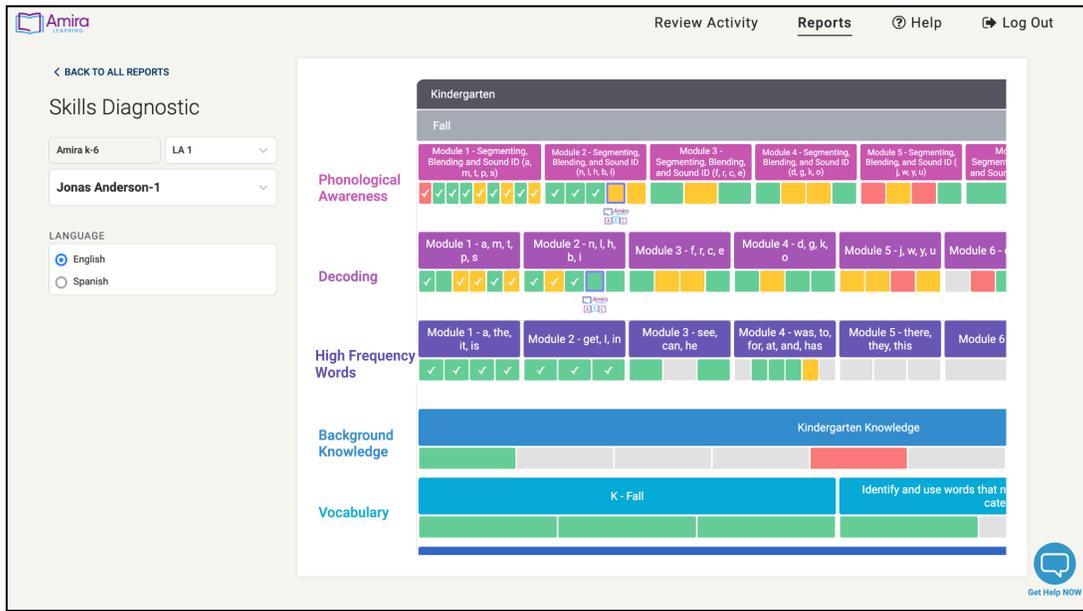
## E. Skills Status Report

The Skills Status Report is a deep dive into the data providing the scores for the Instructional Recommendations report. Here a teacher can **see each skill in their state standards as they associate with different components of the Reading Rope**. On the left side of the report, teachers can change which pillar of the Reading Rope they'd like to see projected. Each box on the screen represents one standard and color reports the child's level of mastery with the skill. Should a teacher toggle or click on a standard box, they will see a description of the standard, the number of times a child has encountered this standard and the number of errors they've made. A teacher can also access teaching resources or learning activities by clicking on the box. The color coding is associated with the percentage of errors made and teachers reported knowing the number of errors is helpful when deciding the next steps for teaching. The children's names on this report can be sorted based on their reading group or different skills they are practicing. The data from this report is populated each time a child reads with Amira practice or assessment. It is gathered from the child's voice reading to Amira. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Skills Status Report.



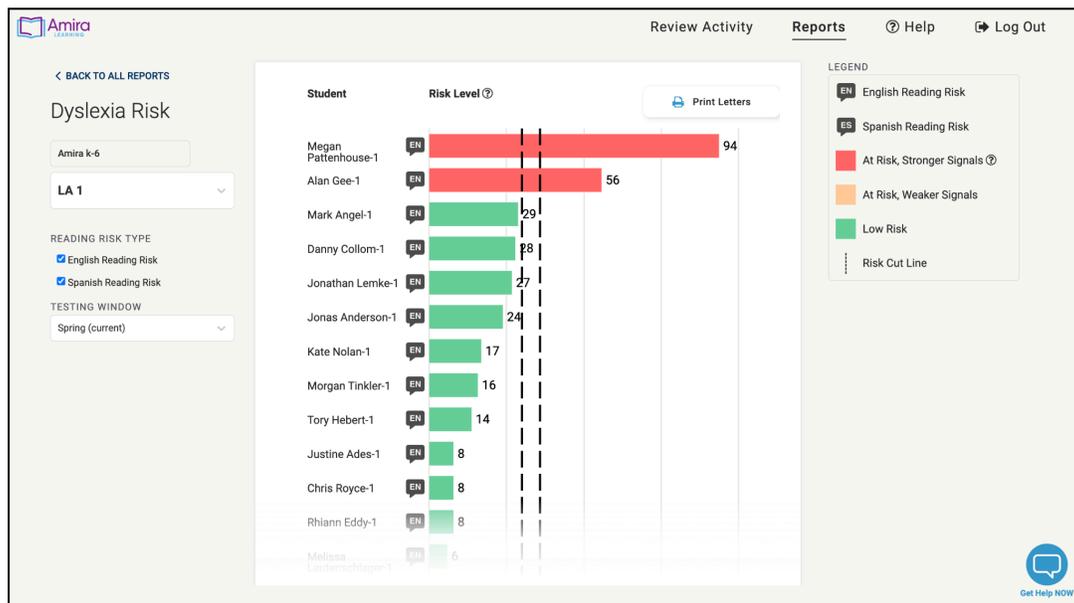
## F. Skills Diagnostic Report

If a teacher wishes to see the **information for an individual child but with all the components of the Reading Rope at once**, they will move to The Skills Diagnostic Report. This report allows teachers to see all the pillars of the reading rope aligned to their state standards and with the student's reading achievement reported in each box. Again, teachers can see how many times a child has encountered a standard and the number of times they've made an error and this is associated with a color coding based on mastery. Lastly, tailored resources, aligned to the associated skill are provided for extra practice. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Skills Diagnostic Report.



## G. Dyslexia Risk Report

The final report on the Teacher Dashboard is The Dyslexia Risk Report. This report allows teachers to easily **see which students have Dyslexia risk** and should be considered for additional testing and/or services for support. The scores are clear and based on the students' abilities while taking the Dyslexia Screener offered through Amira Learning. The Dyslexia Screener takes students about ten minutes, has various tasks based on grade level, is offered in English and in Spanish, and is incredibly effective at determining risk. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Dyslexia Risk Screener.



## H. Badging Report

The Badging Report allows teachers to **celebrate reading milestones with their students**. Students will earn badges for achieving different milestones including total sessions, minutes this week, new WCPM highs, Early Reader Skills Scaffold graduation, and fluency milestones. Teachers can assign badges when they have been earned by clicking on a badge next to a student's name; badges will then appear in the student's Progress screen. Teachers can also print certificates for students when badges have been earned to more easily motivate students and recognize their growth. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Badging Report.

The screenshot displays the Amira Badging Report interface. On the left, there is a sidebar with a 'Badging Report' section, a dropdown menu for 'Amira k-6', and another dropdown menu for 'LA 1'. The main area features a table with the following columns: Last Name, First Name, Badges Earned, New Awards, Total Sessions, Minutes This Week, WCPM, Skills Scaffold Graduation, New High, and Built By You. The table contains data for eight students, each with a checkbox, a name, and various icons representing earned badges and awards. At the bottom of the table, there are three buttons: 'Award 10 Badges', 'Print 2 Certificates', and 'Build Certificates'. The interface also includes a 'Log Out' button in the top right corner and a 'Get Help NOW' button in the bottom right corner.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	First Name	Badges Earned	New Awards	Total Sessions	Minutes This Week	WCPM	Skills Scaffold Graduation	New High	Built By You
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ades-1	Justine	8							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Affeldt-1	Liz	7							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Anderson-1	Jonas	5	96						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Angel-1	Mark								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Arseneault-1	Rob	5							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bovard-1	Kelly								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Choudhary-1	Ashutosh	5							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coelho-1	Kristen	4							

## I. Class Progress Report

With the Class Progress Report, teachers can easily **view and compare the Beginning of Year (BOY), Middle of Year (MOY), and End of Year (EOY) scores, along with percentile ranks, for all their students** in a single view. As students complete assessments during the Beginning of Year (BOY), Middle of Year (MOY), and End of Year (EOY) periods, their scores and corresponding percentile rankings will be displayed. By considering the benchmark scores, a teacher can easily see student progress, growth, or concern. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Class Progress Report.

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Review Activity **Reports** Help Log Out

< BACK TO ALL REPORTS

### Class Progress Report

Howe Elementary

Amira Class

SCORE CONFIGURATION

METRIC <sup>?</sup>

Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

BENCHMARKS <sup>?</sup>

National Norms - Grade 1

LANGUAGE

English

Spanish

ASSESSMENT TYPE

Benchmark Assessment Only

Latest Assessment (including progress monitoring)

	Fall (BOY)			Winter (MOY)			Spring (EOY)		
	WCPM	PR	Latest	WCPM	PR	Latest	WCPM	PR	Latest
Kathy Blake ● AS/Above	55	76	33	86	39	97	87	82	99
Cristofer Siphron ● Intervention	80	4	3	9	72	99	36	20	5
Jordyn Philips ● AS/Above	89	79	51	75	73	4	1	96	4
Randy Vaccaro ● AS/Above	19	11	11	62	51	83	84	61	39
Carter Curtis ● AS/Above	63	50	94	86	50	75	30	72	67
Lydia Septimus ● AS/Above	12	70	11	24	42	32	30	96	37
Phillip George ● AS/Above	67	33	84	19	95	36	20	48	31
Cooper Vetrovs ● Intervention	93	47	33	92	35	93	50	7	82
Madelyn Gouse ● Catch up	10	76	52	15	70	6	91	19	34
Jordyn Siphron ● Intervention	8	91	25	54	45	80	45	7	65
Tiana Curtis ● AS/Above	32	32	85	69	52	2	10	81	58
Maren Vaccaro ● AS/Above	80	44	94	93	98	71	61	75	74
Lincoln Saris ● AS/Above	78	48	48	73	58	2	55	62	13
Kierra Workman ● Intervention	31	86	97	26	46	26	91	20	40
Rayna Bothman ● AS/Above	35	6	90	79	21	48	86	48	4

### 5.3 Reports Key

Report	Purpose	How & When	What Else? / Resources
<a href="#">Tracking Report</a>	Assign & Monitor Assessment Completion Assign ERSS/Bilingual	Before, during, and after testing	The command center for assigning assessments, identifying bilingual and Early Reader scaffolding.
<a href="#">Benchmark Report</a>	Class Results for Assessment	Ongoing - Check after assessment or progress monitoring	Uses for grouping purposes. Includes Instructional Reading Level (F&P, Lexile, DRA)
<a href="#">Class Progress Report</a>	Class Results for Assessment	Ongoing - Check after assessment or progress monitoring	Reflects most recent assessment & progress monitoring scores for a full class across the school year.

<a href="#">Progress Report</a>	Student Progress & Predicted Ability	Ongoing - Check after assessment, practice, or progress monitoring	Uses recordings, transcripts & curriculum for miscue analysis. See Practice history.
<a href="#">Instructional Recommendations</a>	Instructional & Resource Recommendations	Ongoing - Get ideas for instruction	Identifies specific skills and links to aligned Into Reading lessons
<a href="#">Parent Report</a>	Student Progress for Parents	Intermittent - Parent meetings / conferences	Reflects most recent assessment scores & provides tips
<a href="#">Skills Status Report</a>	Class visualization of mastery in every reading skill.	Ongoing - Check after assessment, practice, or progress monitoring	Easily create small groups based on skills mastery levels!
<a href="#">Skills Diagnostic Report</a>	Student-level visualization of a student's reading ability.	Ongoing - Check after assessment or progress monitoring	Easy access to aligned interventions for reading skills.
<a href="#">Dyslexia Report</a>	Class Screening with Risk Level	1-3 times a year - Plan for additional diagnosis	(30+ is "at risk"). Uses the other reports to pinpoint areas to support
<a href="#">Badging Report</a>	Assign Badges & Certificates	Ongoing - Check daily or weekly	Create your own badges based on your classroom's goals

Learn more about [norms](#) used for [Amira's metrics](#).

## Part 6: Test Security Manual

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### 6.1 Overview of Test Security Manual

This section is focused on ensuring that your administration of the Amira Assessment is secure. It describes the recommended test security policies, procedures, and responsibilities for ensuring the security of Amira Assessments and compliance by all individuals associated with Amira testing, the steps you should take to protect both the fidelity of the test and the privacy of your students, and answers Frequently Asked Questions about the security measures built into the Amira assessment and software.

### 6.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Successful administration of the Amira Assessment is a team effort. Everyone can contribute to making sure the test produces the best possible information while minimizing security risks.

Key Player	Role
<b>Principal</b>	Building level coordination
<b>District Assessment Owner (DAO)</b>	Liaison to Amira
<b>Technical Coordinator (TechLead)</b>	Technical support
<b>Teachers</b>	Reporting Users
<b>School Assessment Leader (SAL)</b>	Coordinates the testing process for an individual school

#### ***Principal:***

School administrators play a vital role in Amira test administration. Their central role is to be the communication hub linking parents, teachers and District level administrators.

#### *Critical Success Factors:*

- Principals need to set aside time to work with teachers.
- Principals need to attend the Getting Started training.
- Principals need to build a first-order understanding of the data the Amira assessment generates.

#### *General Responsibilities:*

- Designate Proctors.
- Ensure testing is scheduled and on track for completion in the testing window.

- Schedule time to meet with grade-level teams to review data.

*Security-Related Responsibilities:*

- Report testing irregularities as specified by District Policy
- Ensure compliance with the Amira Test Security Policy within the building

***District Assessment Owner (DAO):***

The DOA is the main owner of the Assessment process. The Assessment Owner is the main contact for Amira and partners with the Amira Success Manager (CSM). The DAO serves as the clearinghouse for all questions and concerns for both district and school staff.

*Critical Success Factors:*

- Has the time to provide support and coordination during test windows.
- Willingness to communicate consistently and in a timely fashion with the Amira CSM
- Understanding of early literacy assessment

*General Responsibilities:*

- Ensuring SALs understand test administration procedures and allowable testing accommodations.
- Ensuring that SALs are trained and prepared for school testing
- Helping teachers understand the Amira testing process
- Preparing the Assessment schedule
- Working with Amira and the TechLead to ensure hardware and environmental readiness
- Monitoring test completion
- Working with Principals to ensure that re-dos and make-up tests occur within the schedule
- Preparing testing schedules in coordination with Principals and
- Sharing these schedules with all participants in the process
- Ensuring the TechLead has audited all testing devices for compatibility with minimum testing requirements

*Security-Related Responsibilities:*

- Ensuring all staff involved in testing have read and understand the Amira Test Security Policy and protocols
- Ensuring that the TechLead has complied with security testing policies
- Recording and collecting testing irregularity data
- Resolving security issues and concerns with Amira

***Technical Lead (TechLead):***

The Technical Lead is the main contact between the district and Amira's Support team. The Lead is responsible for all preparation work to make sure the labs and testing rooms are conducive to successful testing.

*Critical Success Factors:*

- Has the time to support the Assessment process
- Reviews Amira's technical materials

*General Responsibilities:*

- Ensuring all testing devices are in good working order and remediate if necessary
- Ensuring all testing equipment is ready before each testing session, including working headphones
- Reporting network or infrastructure issues to the appropriate help desk
- Working with Amira, the District technical team and the DAO to resolve any issues

*Security Responsibilities:*

- Record testing irregularity data and report instances to the Amira CSM
- Making sure that the latest version of the Lockdown Browser is available on each testing device.
- Conducts reviews of hardware to

**Teachers:**

Teachers are essential to testing. Teachers drive test fidelity by implementing the protocols learned in training.

*Critical Success Factors:*

- Comfort with the purpose of the Amira Assessment
- Understanding of the data generated by the test
- Attending and absorbing the training on how to use the data and Amira reports

*Responsibilities:*

- Ensure that students have worked with Amira practice prior to the Assessment
- Prepare students so that they know what to expect
- Prepare the testing environments
- Sharing and explaining test data with students and parents
- Ensure all students in the class are tested within the testing window
- Keep test takers on task
- Deal with any environmental issues that might impair performance

*Security Responsibilities:*

- Helping monitor test sessions
- Monitor for unauthorized materials
- Ensure that students do not access materials or devices that might provide assistance
- Maintain a quiet environment and minimize disruptions
- Record testing irregularity data and report instances to the SAL

### **School Assessment Lead (SAL):**

The School Lead is responsible for the smooth and secure administration of the test in their school.

#### *Critical Success Factors:*

- Has the time to provide support and coordination during test windows.
- Willingness to communicate consistently and in a timely fashion with the DAO
- Attends Amira training

#### *General Responsibilities*

- Ensuring Teachers understand test administration procedures and allowable testing accommodations.
- Ensuring that Teachers are trained and prepared for school testing
- Ensuring that the DAOs scheduled milestones are achieved
- Working with Amira and the District's TechLead to ensure hardware and environmental readiness
- Monitoring test completion
- Working with their Principal to ensure that re-dos and make-up tests occur within the schedule

#### *Security-Related Responsibilities:*

- Ensuring all school staff involved in testing have read and understand the Amira Test Security Policy and protocols
- Ensuring that walls are free of materials that might aid test-takers
- Recording and collecting testing irregularity data and sharing any issues with the DAO

## **6.3 Assessment Security Plan**

Valid results require maintaining the security of the test. Amira works with each District to create a Security Plan. The Security Plan has the following elements:

<b>Security Components</b>	<b>Narrative</b>
<b>Environment</b>	This section describes the recommended approach to maintaining a test-taking environment that optimizes security and validity.
<b>Retesting</b>	This section covers when and how to re-test in a way that maintains test security and integrity.
<b>Proctoring</b>	This section covers best practices for teacher proctoring, particularly in relation to ensuring administration security.
<b>Privacy</b>	This section covers the Amira approach to privacy and security from a technology perspective.

## ***Environment***

Amira is immune from many of the security problems that have traditionally plagued digital tests. Because students are doing reading and reading-related tasks, there is very little opportunity to cheat. They must produce responses. But, there are important precautions that ensure the testing environment does not introduce bias or allow the student to escape from the requirement to do oral reading.

- Materials on walls cannot convey information that might aid the student
- Pre-testers must be out of hearing range of active testers
- Student start times should be staggered by at least 90 seconds
- Students should be seated such that they cannot touch the student on either side with their elbows
- Students should not be allowed to coach one another
- Adults should not coach or prompt test takers
- Disruptions should be minimized
- The overall noise in the environment should be managed to a level such that when standing next to a student their reading can be clearly heard
- Any disruptive student should be removed from the assessment environment

## ***Retesting***

Retesting is rarely required with Amira. Nationally, the retesting rate is below 1%. However, retesting is warranted under a few circumstances. Amira keeps retests secure by varying the items a student encounters on a 2nd (Nth) attempt. Amira provides online forms and trouble ticketing systems to record any irregularities.

The following situations are NOT valid reasons to re-test:

- Student illness
- Testing or student disruptions

Students who are disruptive should be removed from the testing area and rescheduled to test at a later time. In the rare instance of a drill occurring, SALs should inform Teachers in advance so that testing will not be disrupted.

The following situations are VALID reasons to retest:

- The student received meaningful help from an adult or student
- The student did not get the accommodations they needed
- A student's test was taken by someone else, due to a login issue

“Meaningful help” encompasses a logical array of situations where the student was guided to correct responses they otherwise would have been unable to provide:

- The student got answers from another person
- Someone else read to Amira during the test process
- The student received guidance that provided clues to correct reading
- The student was given materials that provided answers
- The student was clearly mimicking another student and not reading on their own.

## **Proctoring**

In 99% of implementations, proctoring is a shared responsibility between Amira and the teacher.

The Amira avatar is designed to handle most of the test administration. The software incorporates a vast number of proctoring capabilities. For most situations that occur during the testing process, Amira has rule-based proctoring solutions to enable every student's score to be valid. Amira relieves teachers of most of the micro-management that would otherwise be necessary.

However, teachers/proctors still have a vital role to play in maintaining test administration integrity and security. This lists below outline the recommended proctoring method:

What to do:

- Security: monitor for unauthorized materials.
- Security: monitor for students communicating with each other in any way during testing.
- Validity: maintain a reasonably quiet environment.
- Validity: minimize disruptions
- Validity: move students onto the next activity as the finish.
- Security: record & report irregularity instances

What NOT to do:

- Validity: DO NOT coach students in any way
- Validity: DO NOT help students by providing example reading or answers. Amira will pick this up.

What the Teacher/Proctor need not worry about:

- Amira manages the time of the test. There is no need to move students along.
- Amira will do the scoring by applying a consistent rubric. There is no reason to worry about "grey" responses.
- Student audio levels – Amira will manage this.
- Network issues – Amira will identify this.

## **Privacy**

Amira is highly secure and is designed around privacy safeguards. However, ensuring the privacy of students requires adherence to common-sense guidelines. The dominant reason for breaches are lapses at the human level.

### *1. Guard Against Unattended Reporting Data*

Amira constrains data access to those explicitly permissioned to see a student's information. However, keeping reports open on a computer or failing to manage physical print-outs of assessment data can defeat the security embedded into the software.

### *2. Manage Parental Reporting carefully*

Amira provides a rich array of mechanisms for reporting information to Parents. Safeguards are built into the software to prevent inappropriate access. But, teachers must handle reporting carefully. We recommend avoiding printing reports in favor of utilizing electronic distribution.

3. *Keep extracts at the District level*

Amira's teacher reporting is designed to be utilized online and "live". This prevents the creation of files that can be exposed during hacks or redistributed without permission.

## 6.4 FAQs About Amira Security

### 1. Does Amira vary items across Windows?

Yes. Each screening window (fall, winter, spring) has a unique, separate and distinct Item Pool. Items are specifically designed and tested for psychometric and pedagogical fit to a given timeframe in the school year. Each student is guaranteed to see a new set of items each time they take the test.

### 2. How does Amira maintain Item security?

With rare exceptions, Amira's items are direct observation of reading ability. 98% of the items are not multiple choice. 94% of the items require a form of oral reading. As a consequence, Amira's items are inherently secure, immunized from students being artificially able to memorize or prepare. In general, Amira's items draw from decades of CBM research, which demonstrate that having students do the tasks they are asked to do daily in the classroom is a strong means of ensuring security, reliability and validity.

However, Amira protects Item Security through traditional means associated with CAT digital tests.

- Random variation within a Window: Amira maintains an Item Pool for each Task (sub-test) within the Assessment that is substantially larger in each Assessment Window than the maximum configured number of items. This enables variation that cannot be anticipated.
- Distinct Items across Windows: Per the above, Amira maintains a distinct Item Pool for each of the three assessment windows.
- New Items Each School Year: Amira tests new items each school year. These in-testing items are presented within the regular assessment regime but do not contribute to scoring or measurement. Items that achieve psychometric standards are then incorporated into the following school year Item Pools. This ensures a constant flow of new and unanticipated items in each screening/assessment window.

### 3. Do students receive the same items more than once?

No. Exceptions to this may occur for tasks with inherently limited item pools such as Letter sound fluency. Other than those exceptions, variation within the Window item pool, across Windows, across grades and across school years is used to preclude students seeing items repetitively, even when retested during a window.

Students will not see duplicate items across school years because the Item Pools for each grade are separate and distinct. Students will not see duplicate items across windows because the item pools for each Grade-Window are separate and unique. Students will not see duplicate items on a re-test within a window because the alternative forms for reassessment are separate and unique.

#### 4. How does Amira preserve student privacy?

Amira preserves the security of student information via a rigorous program of adhering to standards and best practices. The company is a signatory to all leading Student Privacy pledges. Partnering with HMH, we have followed a protocol such that most PII resides only in the HMH data centers, and all student assessment data resides only in the Amira data centers. This separation makes a breach almost impossible.

#### 5. How does Amira evolve test forms and items?

Amira employs a trial by fire approach whereby items that meet psychometric standards are deployed into the production environment and used randomly within active tests. This ensures that over the course of the target window a nationally representative sample of data is collected and that this data reflects actual outcomes within the production testing process. Items are tested over the course of 1 school year. The data is then evaluated using a range of psychometric measures, including DIF. New items are then incorporated into the Item Pool. This results in a constant flow of fresh items into the testing process.

Test security is further maintained by the regular retirement of items. This retirement process is driven by psychometric data, particularly DIF calculations.

#### 6. What policies does Amira follow in terms of managing student data?

- ✓ FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
- ✓ COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998)
- ✓ ISO/IEC 27018:2014 (Data standards)
- ✓ The Software & Information Industry Association
- ✓ Student Privacy Pledge introduced by the Future of Privacy Forum (FPF)

### 6.5 Security & Privacy Practices

The sections below provide details on the technical architecture employed by the Amira test to ensure security and privacy.

#### ***Secure Architecture***

*Authentication:*

Amira relies on the AWS Cognito authentication service to ensure hack-resistant and highly secure authentication of users.

Cognito is a standards-based Identity Provider and supports identity and access management standards, such as Oauth 2.0, SAML 2.0, and OpenID Connect. Via Cognito, support is available for multi-factor authentication, encryption of data-at-rest and encryption in-transit. Cognito is HIPPA, PCI DSS, SOC, ISO/IEC 27001, ISO/IEC 27017, ISO/IEC 27018, and ISO 9001 compliant.

*Encryption On The Wire:*

All Amira data is encrypted when in motion, utilizing HTTPS. This ensures data security over the wire.

*Data At Rest:*

Amira takes a range of measures to guard against a security breach impacting student data.

First, Amira maintains a single, separate repository for student information. This repository is both physically and logically separate from information related to that student. IOW, Amira’s architecture is founded on a complete and total segregation of data about who a student is (PII) and application data associated with that student. Amira’s approach to data storage is highly, highly resistant to privacy damage.

Second, Amira encrypts all PII data at rest.

Third, Amira maintains a bare minimum of information related to any student or educator. We are not keeping financial information, government identifiers, addresses, health or medical information. Our storage is limited to names, some basic demographics and foundational rostering relationships.

*Data Center Certifications:*

Amira’s data centers are certified for compliance with a wide range of standards and under-go a broad spectrum of security reviews. This is highlighted in the certification list to the right.

The data centers comply with a range of ISO and SOC requirements.

United States

 <b>CJIS</b> Criminal Justice Information Services	 <b>DoD SRG</b> DoD Data Processing	 <b>FedRAMP</b> Government Data Standards	 <b>FERPA</b> Educational Privacy Act	 <b>FFIEC</b> Financial Institutions Regulation
 <b>FIPS</b> Government Security Standards	 <b>FISMA</b> Federal Information Security Management	 <b>GxP</b> Quality Guidelines and Regulations	 <b>HIPAA</b> Protected Health Information	 <b>HITRUST CSF Certified</b> HITRUST CSF Health Information Trust Alliance Common Security Framework
 <b>ITAR</b> International Arms Regulations	 <b>MPAA</b> Protected Media Content	 <b>NIST</b> National Institute of Standards and Technology	 <b>SEC Rule 17a-4(f)</b> Financial Data Standards	 <b>VPAT / Section 508</b> Accessibility Standards

Global

 <b>CSA</b> cloud security alliance™	 <b>ISO 9001</b> International Organization for Standardization	 <b>ISO 27001</b> International Organization for Standardization	 <b>ISO 27017</b> International Organization for Standardization	 <b>ISO 27018</b> International Organization for Standardization
<b>CSA</b>	<b>ISO 9001</b>	<b>ISO 27001</b>	<b>ISO 27017</b>	<b>ISO 27018</b>

Additionally, Amira’s data centers are:

1. Certified Under the EU-US Privacy Shield
2. Covered by a GDPR Data Processing Addendum (GDA).

Certification certificates, compliance reports and audits are available on request.

#### *SOC 1 and SOC 2 Reports*

Amira will provide SOC reports on request. A non-disclosure agreement (NDA) is required.

### ***Privacy Architecture***

This section highlights Amira’s approach to protecting student and general user privacy. We take privacy risks incredibly seriously.

Amira’s Data Centers conform to the following the privacy regulations shown to the right.

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Americas

		
Argentina Data Privacy	California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA)	Canada Data Privacy [PIPEDA]

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#### *Privacy Agreements:*

Amira is a signatory to the Student Privacy Pledge introduced by the Future of Privacy Forum.

#### *FERPA Compliant:*

Amira complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and our commitment to do so is included in our contractual agreements with Districts.

*Compliance with District Requirements:*

Amira operates from the foundational principle that student data is the property of the School District. We comply with the District's guidance associated with the collection and storage of all data. In particular, we expect that the District will dictate whether we retain audio beyond the moment of its use within the application, and if so for how long. We have facilities for exporting all relevant data to the District and then purging that data from Amira's data centers. So, at the end of the day, Amira's approach to privacy and data is YOUR approach.

## Part 7: Frequently Asked Questions About Amira Assessments

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### 7.1 FAQs About Amira Assessments

- 1. Does Amira understand my student’s speech issue?** The general rule of thumb is “if you can understand the student, so can Amira.” If there is a student with such an acute issue that it would have always taken a specialist to work with them, then that would be the case for Amira as well.
- 2. What does the assessment status “Early Reader” mean?** Many kindergarten students (and some students in other grade levels) will attempt the assessment and receive a designation of “Early Reader.” For example, a non-reading first grader would take the first grade ORF and “level down” to the Kindergarten passage. After a minute of not being successful, Amira will close out and thank the student while knowing they are now an “Early Reader.” Their reports and status appear differently within Amira. An Early Reader will likely have a score of 7 WCPM or less. Let’s think about that: if a student is reading 7 (or fewer) words per minute, the student really isn’t reading. As such, there isn’t a lot of “reading” data for this student, let alone a complete recording. If you see a start marked as “Early Reader” but you believe they can indeed read more words, we recommend giving them a “Progress Monitoring” passage.
- 3. What does the assessment status “Under Review” mean?** This can be due to a variety of factors – audio, student voice level, background noise, etc. – and is not a cause for alarm. It means that Amira is working on scoring the assessment and will update the student’s status within 72 hours. If Amira is unable to score with precise accuracy, the assessment is flagged for human review by Amira staff. If at this point the assessment was unable to be scored, the student’s assessment status will say “Reassess” on the Tracking Report. The teacher should then select the student and “Assign Benchmark Assessment.”

<i>Assigned</i>	<i>District Assigned</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Under Review</i>	<i>Reassess</i>	<i>Early Reader</i>
Student has been assigned an assessment and will receive it at next login.	Student has been assigned an assessment beginning on a certain date.	Student has completed assessment. View results: Benchmark & Dyslexia Reports.	Student has started but not yet completed.	Student completed, however it has been flagged for manual review (72hrs).	Student completed, but there was an issue leading to an invalid score.	Student completed, and was unable to complete the Kinder passage.

- 4. How do I know when to reassess?** On the Tracking Report, Amira will tell you “Reassess,” which is typically due to a tech issue leading to an invalid score. Amira takes the student at face value– she scores exactly what she hears, including if the student is being silent or having one of those days... If necessary, teachers should assign another benchmark or a “Progress Monitoring” assessment, and then watch how the student performs in a distraction-free environment. If something *still* seems off, let Amira staff know by emailing [support@amiralearning.com](mailto:support@amiralearning.com) with the student’s name, class, and test date.
  
- 5. Do we have to use a headset with a microphone?** Headsets of all types are optional. Most devices have built in speakers and microphones that work great for Amira. She works to lock in on the foreground voice and not pay attention to the background noise. (Although you will hear all the background noise in the audio). Sometimes it is good for a student to have a headset to block out any distractions or to have headsets with a mic to pick up quiet speech. Sometimes teachers prefer to use Amira in a small group setting with headphones for that rotation to help students concentrate.
  
- 6. Is Amira too hard for my student?** For students not yet reading connected texts, Amira provides a different type of practice/tutoring for those students: the Early Reader Sequence. We still recommend that students know 10 letters before they start this sequence. This sequence can either be A) assigned proactively by the teacher in the tracking report; or B) assigned by Amira after she gets to know the student’s reading abilities. We are working on ways for Amira to support and scaffold more for students who might have little to no reading experience.

## 7.2 Help and Support

Have a question that has not yet been answered?

- Search the [help center](#) to find an article or **chat with Amira’s support team** in-the-moment
- Email [support@amiralearning.com](mailto:support@amiralearning.com).